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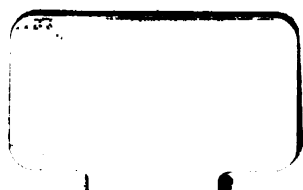
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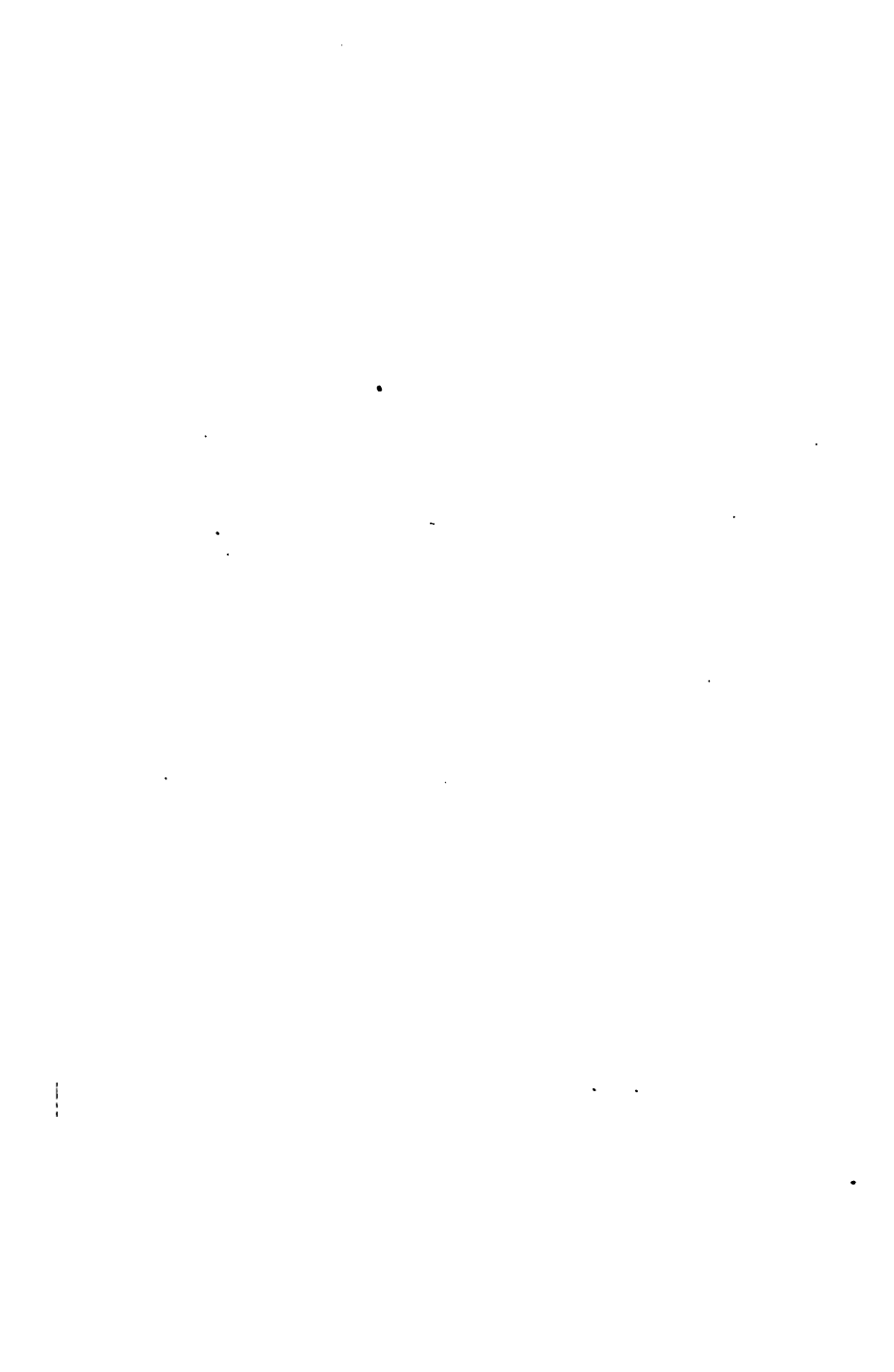
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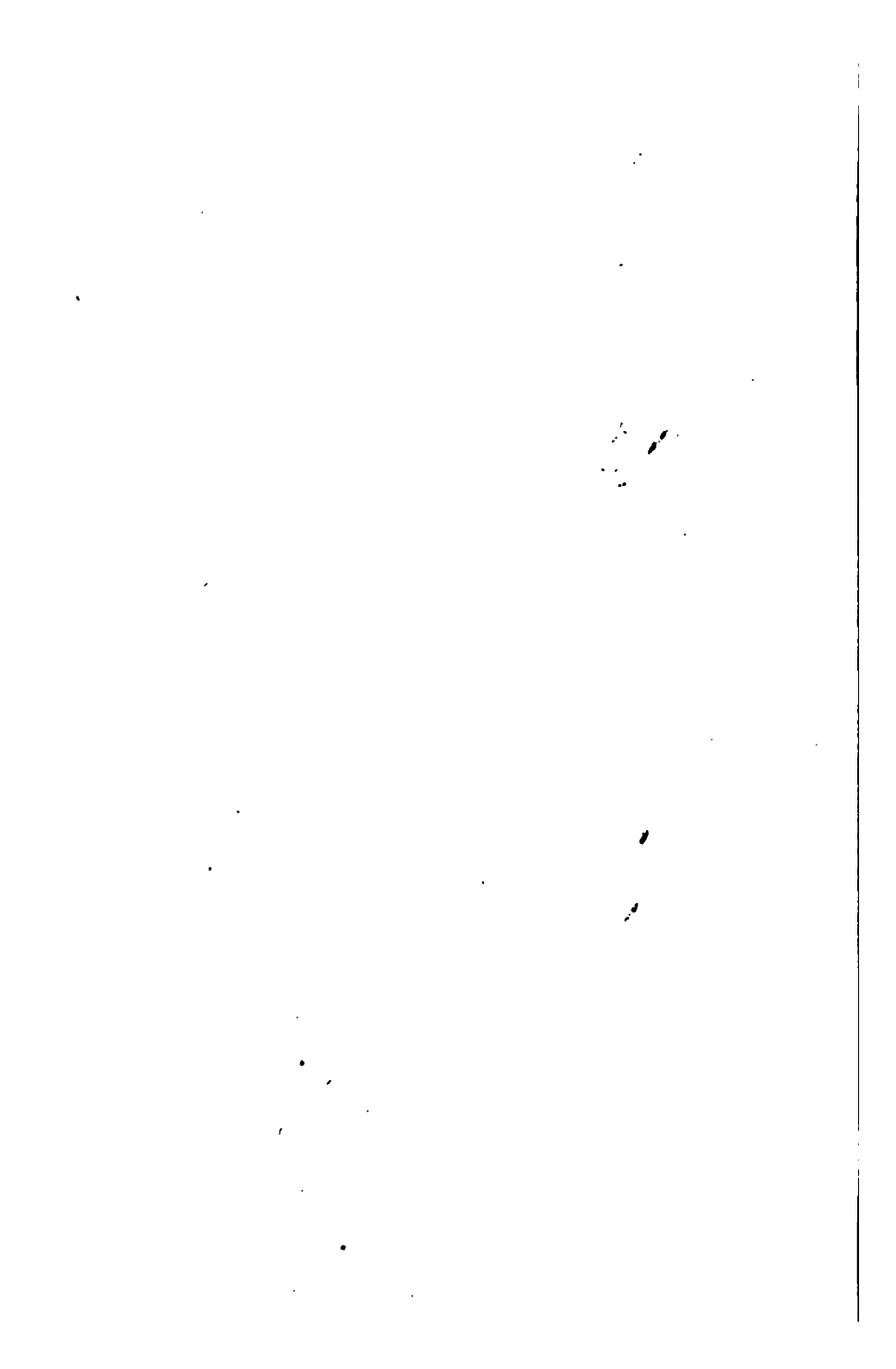
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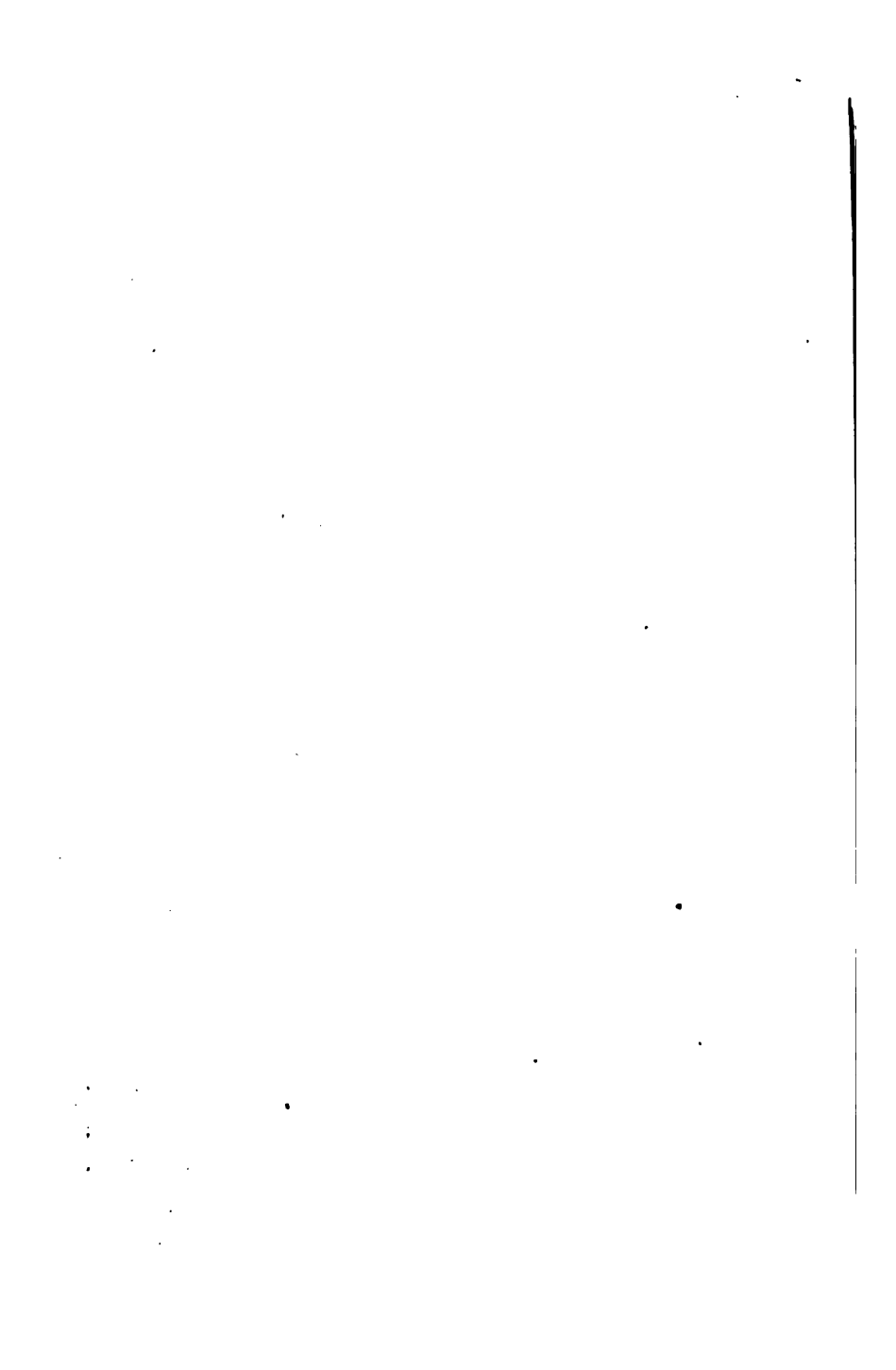








THE
FACE OF THE KING;
OR,
SEEING JESUS.



THE
FACE OF THE KING;

OR,

SEEING JESUS,
MAN'S GREATEST PLEASURE AND GRANDEST
OCCUPATION.

BY

THE REV. J. HILES HITCHENS, F.R.S.L,
AUTHOR OF "WORDS FROM THE WATCHTOWER," "NEAR THE CROSS,"
"BEHOLD THE MAN," ETC.

"Now, therefore, let me see the King's face."

2 SAMUEL xiv, 32.

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**THE
PRE-EMINENT OBJECT OF VISION IS
JESUS.**

**"O Love that burnest ever inextinguishable ! O sweet Christ !
O good Jesus ! O Love, my God, kindle me entirely with Thy fire,
with Thy love, with Thy sweetness, with Thy charity, with Thy
joy and rejoicing, with Thy goodness and piety, with Thy pleasure,
with desire of Thee which is holy and good, chaste and pure ; that,
being altogether full of the sweetness of Thy love, being kindled by
the flame of Thy charity, I may love Thee, my most precious Lord,
with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my strength, and with
all my mind ; with much contrition of heart, and with a fountain of
tears, with much reverence and trembling, having Thee in my heart,
and mouth, and before my eyes, always and everywhere, so that no
room may be left for strange loves."**

AUGUSTIN.

"That in all things he might have the pre-eminence."

PAUL.

SEEING JESUS.

CHAPTER I.

THE PRE-EMINENT OBJECT OF VISION IS JESUS.

“Oh ! then repeat the truth, that never tires :
No God is like the God my soul desires ;
He, at whose voice heaven trembles, even He,
Great as He is, knows how to stoop to me.

“Vain pageantry and pomp of earth, adieu ! .
I have no wish, no memory for you !
Rich in God's love, I feel my noblest pride
Spring from the sense of having nought beside.”

MADAME GUYON.

“THE eye is not satisfied with seeing,” says the royal preacher. Having fastened its full gaze on the beauties of nature and the wonders of art, it still “with thirst insatiate craves for more.” Pains and expense are not spared to gratify its longings. Business is neglected, duty forsaken, sacrifices endured, the ocean's crested waves are ploughed, the snow-clad hills are climbed, the sterile desert is crossed,

dangers are encountered, and death dared, in order to supply that for which the eye yearns with unallayed avidity.

It not unfrequently happens, however, that disappointment succeeds the most strenuous efforts. Many hours, perhaps days, are expended in seeking that which appears desirable and joy-affording; but when the position is attained, the object secured, we are surprised by a non-fulfilment of our expectations, and a consequent vexation. Like travellers who have risen early and toiled hard to reach the summit of Helvellyn or Snowdon, only to find themselves enveloped in a mist, and the picturesque, attractive, awe-inspiring scenery concealed by cloud; or like those who, relying on exaggerated statements, and over-drawn landscape pictures, have found the reality far beneath their glowing anticipations. But, under the most favourable circumstances, the corporeal eye cannot afford satisfaction so profound, or interest so stupendous, as that which the mental vision contributes. Nor can we ever discover in this sublunary sphere objects so marvellous, majestic, matchless, as we may discern in the spiritual world.

There is one object of which no description can be extravagant—which no skilful limner can portray too brightly, and with which none, however familiar therewith, shall ever be dissatisfied. You may possess the most perfect taste for the sublime and beautiful; you may be familiar with the grandest panorama of nature; you may have frequented spots wealthy with hallowed and imperishable

memories; you may have deciphered God's initials on the giant mountain's brow—on the leaping, laughing rivulet winding its way between the emerald banks—on the deep, dark, disturbed bosom of the never-slumbering sea—on the meadows and valleys purpled with the many-coloured flowers—on “the immeasurable azure which is overhead—everywhere brilliant with stars”—on the sun bedecking the eastern hills with arrowy streaks of amber, and diffusing over the western horizon a flood of gorgeous crimson—on “the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, or the precious things put forth by the moon, or the chief things of the ancient mountains, or the precious things of the lasting hills”—on all that has engaged the Omnipotent hand of the Creator, and courted the admiration of the creature, and yet to that pre-eminent object you may turn with feelings of intensest wonder, appreciation, and love. That object is the Being whom angelic intelligences gaze on with infinite pleasure, captivated by his charms—whose day holy patriarchs and prophets waited anxiously to behold—whom men and angels, accustomed to the noblest and most ravishing visions, have agreed to declare, “The chief among ten thousand and the altogether lovely.” No created object can vie with Christ. All things, even the loftiest idealisms of mortal minds, sink into inferiority when compared with Him, as the productions of man in juxtaposition with the perfect handiworks of God. He embodies all that

is attractive, valuable, and good. And as a diamond flashes with beauteous hues, from whatever point, or in whatever light you view it, so, to whatever period in the Saviour's earthly career, and to whatever relationship in the Redeemer's two-fold nature you turn, your attention is drawn to, and your heart delighted by, His peerless glory, His matchless excellency and worth.

Look at Christ as *man's model*. He embodies the virtues and unfolds the character we are commanded to cultivate. Nothing teaches like example. There is as much difference between precept and example as between a lifeless portrait and the animated, speaking subject. The mechanic can instruct readiest by models, the mathematician by diagrams, the chemist by experiments, the orator by elocution. Theories often look difficult and tedious when practice is easy. Good as the lesson may be, the influence of the life is better. "Profound reflection is the attribute of but few. Impulse, instinct, are common to all. Hence, while men are deaf to verbal verities, they are keenly sensible to the noble and beautiful in example. It was reserved for Christ alone to magnetise the universal heart. His words were instructions, His life revelations. Both went to the marrow of humanity. They were what it needed. Some being, bearing its likeness, with the same bodily susceptibilities, one of the people, generous, unselfish, sublime in the simplicity of virtue, and intelligible in spoken truth ;

fearless because of the higher life within him, feeling his self-imposed duty, unshrinking from the sad present because of his repose upon the great future, animated by God himself, the medium of the word, if needs be its power, a preacher, prophet, martyr, also in every relation of life a loving, a pleasant *man*. Such was what the world required to inspire it with new religious thoughts.”* Such was Jesus of Nazareth—the absolute centre of humanity—the only denizen of earth in whom the real and the ideal were ever blended. He became a perfect model—a living type. Like an Eastern shepherd who precedes his flock, the founder of our holy religion, the “Good Shepherd,” went before us. Whithersoever He expects us to advance, there, on every inch of the road, His footsteps may be traced. Is it submission to God—frequency in devotion—stability in temptation—self-sacrifice in labour—reverence of Scripture—sorrow over sinners—sympathy with the tried—forgiveness of enemies—fidelity to friends—patience in suffering—confidence in death, to which He calls us? He has bequeathed us an unblemished copy—a faultless example—that we should be imitators of Him. No traces of self-worship can you discern in His conduct, whilst there shines forth, under all circumstances, a majesty which He only could wear who was conscious of His oneness with the Eternal Father. There is not a jot of irritableness or evil passion, albeit

* *Art Studies*. By J. J. Jarves.

withering words of reproof and condemnation escape His lips. No man, however intense his iniquity, is rejected, though the sinner's sins are an acknowledged abomination to Him. We detect no vacillation or inconstancy; every task undertaken is unhesitatingly completed. Having loved His own, He loved them to the end. Every word spoken is discreetly designed to benefit the hearer; and, like an arrow well aimed, finds its lodgment where the Great Archer intended. The fleeting moments pass not unimproved. He is incessantly about His Father's business. He is no unyielding ascetic. His actions are pregnant with love. His spirit uninterruptedly breathes the atmosphere of heaven. Unlike all other characters, there is in His life a beautiful unity, an absolute completeness. No one feature is disproportioned to the others so as to make it an individual idiosyncrasy. Looking at His portraiture, we cannot say He resembles the vehement Peter more than the affectionate John; the humble-minded James more than the undaunted Paul. Neither of these was worthy to unloose his sandals. The excellencies of their characters harmoniously meet in Christ. Ay, all that has ever been normal or beautiful in any man is blended in the man Christ Jesus, without any predominance in one element, or defect in another. The colossal faith of Abraham, the serene meekness of Moses, the quiet patience of Job, the solemn devotion of David, the calm dignity of Daniel, the tenderness of John, the ardour of Peter, the uniform fidelity

of Paul, are incorporated in Jesus. Whatever is good and winsome in dignified, fearless, heroic man ; in modest, thoughtful, merciful woman ; or in submissive, teachable, clinging childhood, may be found in Him. Gather up all the fragments of virtue that lie scattered over the field of history, and, amalgamated, they point to Him as the anti-type. Indulge the highest conception of human progress and perfection, and imagination falls back on Him as the prototype. He that cometh from above is above all. He was not simply *a* man, but *the* man—the perfect ideal of humanity. “*Once* in all history we meet a Being who never did an injury, and never resented one done to Him ; never uttered an untruth ; never practised a deception ; and never lost any opportunity of doing good. Generous in the midst of the selfish, upright in the midst of the dishonest, pure in the midst of the sensual, and wise far above the wisest of earth’s sages and prophets. Loving and gentle, yet immovably resolute, and whose illimitable meekness and patience never forsook him in a vexatious, ungrateful, and cruel world.”*

Such is your peerless example, reader. Looking to the human side of the perfections of your lofty and still living Leader, you can learn how your duties are to be discharged—how your crosses are to be carried—how your enemies are to be encountered—how your purposes are to be pursued—and how your reward is to be reached. You

* Dr. Young.

see Him, in circumstances essentially like yours, doing all that you are commanded to do. You see Christ's humanity subjected to temptation, vicissitude, and sorrow, and thereby mellowed, matured, and perfected. Then, remember that **THE MAN**, the personification of purity, mingled with the vilest, and exemplified all virtues in a world of evil-doers *for the purpose* of showing it possible for *you* to attain, *in kind*, the same excellencies.

But, though man, He is also God. Though, as the "Son of Man," He is our model, as the "Son of God" *He is the personal revelation of the Deity*. The Great Spirit is undefinable, immaterial, and essentially invisible. He dwelleth in inconceivable brightness into which no angel pinion hath ever soared. No man hath seen God at any time; no human thought discovered the mysterious properties of the Divine nature. Yet, with a moral consciousness of His existence, man's heart thirsts for Him. "Like the pale geranium pent within the cottage window," stretching to the light, straining upward to the sun, "coveting its sweet influences." So the spirit of man yearns for the Holy One. But the soul requires some sensible representation of the Divine Being. Without it man's understanding can make no approach to God. Man's affections have nothing around which to entwine; His faith, like Noah's gentle dove, has nought on which it can repose; his piety must "suffer and pine as in an atmosphere too subtle and unsubstantial for its present

earthly constitution." Nature, rendered exuberantly splendid by the lavish land of the Maker, presents us with an apocalypse of many of His perfections ; Providence, with still small voice, or startling thunder-tones, tells of other attributes of the Godhead ; the Prophets aid us by their graphic sketches and stirring declamations—but, till we see Jesus, we are constrained to say with the Patriarch, "I go forward, but He is not there ; and backward, but I cannot perceive Him ; on the left hand, where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him ; He hideth Himself on the right hand, that I cannot see Him." The needed manifestation is afforded in the person of Emmanuel, the living link between the Eternal Father and His children, "the acting Deity of the universe." In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

As God's Son, Jesus, is not only near and dear to the Father, but resembles Him. He is "the express image of His person"—the form of His essence—the counterpart of His wondrous being. Hence, when Philip came to the Saviour with the petition, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us," the Saviour replied, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father ; how sayest thou, then, show us the Father ?" The wise and loving words of Christ were crumbs from the bountiful table of Divine omniscience—echoes of God's voice—reviving, reiterating, enforcing what Eternal wisdom had spoken unto the fathers by the Prophets. The mighty and merciful deeds of Christ were exemplifica-

tions of the Creator's formative energy and controlling dominion. In the transfiguration of Christ we witness the effulgence of the Godhead bursting through the veil of the flesh—His face radiant, not with a borrowed glory like that which sat upon the face of Moses, but with the ineffable splendour of an indwelling Deity. In the dire hour of His arrest, when Judas and the ruthless Roman soldiers drew near to seize Him, we see His inherent majesty displayed; so that, awe-stricken, the armed host "went backward, and fell to the ground." Throughout the seven journeys His enemies compelled Him to take—from the garden to Annas, thence to Caiaphas, thence to the hall of the Sanhedrin, next to Pilate, afterwards to Herod, then back to Pilate, and, lastly, up to Calvary, He demeaned Himself as one calmly conscious of kingly innocence, and not as a self-condemned criminal. With a sense of inward might and majesty He bore positive testimony of Himself—"I am a king; for this end I was born, and have come into the world that I may testify of the truth; whosoever is of the truth heareth my voice." There was something more than the human in that heart-rending look which touched the conscience of the apostate disciple, and forced from his spirit the bitter tears of remorse. On the consecrated height of Calvary He used the language of a God, surcharged with pardoning love and yearning sympathy, whilst all creation, sensible of her insignificance before Him and dependence on Him, joined to do Him homage. "The

grave was ashamed of hiding His dust ; earth threw His ransomed body up to heaven ; and heaven sent forth all its guards and opened all its gates to receive Him into its bosom, where it shall retain Him till the time of the restitution of all things." The disciples ever after took pleasure in the thought, that in knowing Christ they knew the Father also, and that in seeing Jesus they had seen Jehovah. Faithless Thomas exclaimed with rapture, "My Lord, and my God!" Peter could not forget the dazzling glory of the Saviour's transformation. The scene was vivid to the end of life ; and lest any should deem the gospel "a cunningly devised fable," he declared, in his last Epistle, that he was eye-witness of Christ's majesty. So the artless, tender-spirited John testified, in one of his love-letters, that Jesus "is the true God, and eternal life."

With such a supernatural, unique, unparalleled life, concentrating the features of the Divine nature, laying open the Eternal Heart, and mirroring the Father's glory as the sun is reflected in a dew drop, James Burns well sings—

"God's thoughts are love ; and Jesus is
The loving voice they find :
His love lights up the vast abyss
Of the eternal mind."

Turn to Jesus, ye who with aching heart cry with Job, "O that I knew where I might find Him ;" or, with Moses, "Show me Thy glory ;" or, with Philip, "Show us the Father." Look to Jesus—the impress of the Divine sub-

stance—the express, personal manifestation of the Supreme existence, and you shall obtain a response to all the yearnings of your spirit.

The pre-eminence and preciousness of this God-man may be further seen by considering Him as an *all powerful Redeemer*. By the combination of Divinity and humanity in one person, by living as man in spotless rectitude, and dying as the representative of the race, Jesus became all that justice demanded and helpless humanity required. In this world for thirty-three years, on the cross for six trying hours, He laid His firm grasp on the fallen family of Adam, to lift all to liberty and life eternal. We would not attempt to represent the Saviour's lonely, mysterious, unparalleled anguish, but rather follow the ancient artist, who, when portraying the agony of Agamemnon at the death of Iphigenia, his daughter, drew the face of the parent as concealed by a veil. Silently, solemnly, subdued, like them of old, who, "sitting down watched Him there," we would meditate on that event, of all the most marvellous. Inconceivable was His sorrow. He was mentally, morally, and spiritually isolated. Encircled by ignorance, cowardice, and crime, He wandered, with an aching, sensitive heart, a shelterless, homeless, lonely man. From first to last He saw His terrible fate, and the sight was appalling. The world misunderstood and maligned Him. His friends forsook and denied Him. His enemies ruthlessly tormented Him. His heavenly Father withdrew the light of His

countenance from Him, but He was undaunted still. "His own arm brought salvation." Blessed, thrice blessed tidings ! "He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities : the chastisement of our peace was upon Him ; and with His stripes we are healed." "Christ died for us."

Remembering that He made an atonement for human guilt, we can account for His mysterious sufferings, and *in no other way*. It is vain to say His was only a martyr's death. A comparison of our Lord's state of mind with that of the martyr's will at once exhibit a very wide disparity. Christ's "visage was marred more than any man's, and His form more than the sons of men." Dismayed by the prospect of His death, He, in an agony, sweat, as it were, great drops of blood ; and under the limitless burden of His last moments, the bitter lamentation was extorted from His lips, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me !" But the suffering followers of Jesus have anticipated death with boldness, and passed through its valley with a song. Paul, looking to his dark future, wrote, "None of these things move me." Stephen, praying for his murderers, peacefully fell asleep. Bishops Hooper, Latimer, and Ridley ; John Bradford, John Lambert, and John Noyes ; and delicate females, like Elizabeth Folks and Alice Driver, with many more, met their fate with exemplary patience, and in their final hours bore triumphant testimony. Why, then, this wide difference between the model man and those who imitated Him ? With fortitude unsurpassed, with resignation

unabated, with no sin to give birth to fears, why was Christ's mind so sadly disturbed? We are driven to one conclusion. He was a representative man, and as such He carried the Atlantean burden of the world's sins.

Similar thoughts to these led Rousseau to bear the following testimony, which, coming from an unbeliever, deserves notice. "What prepossession, what blindness, must it be to compare the son of Sophroniscus to the Son of Mary! What an infinite disproportion is there between them! Socrates, dying without pain or ignominy, easily supported his character to the last; and if his death, however easy, had not crowned his life, it might have been doubted whether Socrates, with all his wisdom, was anything more than a vain sophist. He invented, it is said, the theory of morals. Others, however, had before put them in practice; he had, therefore, only to say what they had done, and to reduce their examples to precept. But where could Jesus learn, among His competitors, that pure and sublime morality, of which He only hath given us both precept and example? The death of Socrates, peaceably philosophising with his friends, appears the most agreeable that could be wished for; that of Jesus, expiring in the midst of agonising pains, abused, insulted, and accused by a whole nation, is the most horrible that could be feared. Socrates, in receiving the cup of poison, blessed the weeping executioner who administered it; but Jesus, in the midst of excruciating tortures, prayed for His

merciless tormentors. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus were those of a God."

We do not separate the immaculate life from the suffering death of Christ; but looking on his passive obedience as entering into the very essence of the atonement, we say He is the propitiation for our sins. He gave himself a ransom for all. This is the central truth of revelation—the very marrow of the gospel—the consolation of Christianity—the highest expression of Divine love—and the only sure foundation on which to build a hope of salvation. This work of redemption will ever remain unparalleled for significance and sublimity. Long as Eternity it shall occupy the admiring thoughts, and stimulate the grateful soul to untiring praise!

As our *ever-living Intercessor* we must also think of Christ. When He had presented the atoning sacrifice of His humanity on the altar of His Divinity, He soared within the veil—into the glorious recesses of the upper sanctuary—whither no mortal eye can follow Him, and now, in His sacerdotal office, He makes prevalent intercession. "We have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God"—and "Son of Man"—who, without sin, passed through every phase of suffering. He has carried above a heart burning with boundless sympathy, and throbbing with the most exquisite compassion. Undoubtedly, the changes through which the corporeal element of the Saviour's humanity passed before His ascension were

vast and mysterious; nevertheless, His solicitude for us remains as intense, and His feelings as tender as ever. We trace Him through the varied scenes of His career during the forty days He tarried here between His resurrection and ascension; we listen attentively to the words He uttered, and we see no change in His affections toward man. There is the same overflowing beneficence—the same yearning anxiety—and the same superhuman grace that were visible in Him before the fathomless agonies of the cross. Nor are we left without proof of the immutable character of the Saviour's feelings now He has entered on His mediatorial glory. In the Holy of Holies He has given a revelation of His unchanging oneness with us. He has spoken from amid the splendours that envelope His throne, and proved that, though His passion is past, His compassion is still a present reality. Passing by other evidences, we stay simply to point to the closing words of the Apocalyptic vision—the last saying of the Anointed of God, till we hear His voice of approval or condemnation at the great white throne. “I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the spirit and the bride say, come; and let him that heareth say, come; and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” This sublime language closely resembles the words of Incarnate Love while He taught among men. “Jesus stood and

cried, saying, if any man thirst let him come unto Me, and drink!" Sixty years had elapsed between the two utterances, and the surroundings of the speaker had wondrously changed, but the speaker we can still identify. They are the same lips that breathe the gracious invitation; and it is the same heart, influenced by the same emotions, that prompts the words. Though encompassed by all the splendours of the eternal city—though the recipient of the homage of its inhabitants—yet our princely Helper is not forgetful of those who are struggling here with sin and Satan. Whilst He enters into our minutest as well as our mightiest distress, He gathers our imperfect praises and broken prayers, renders them acceptable, and pours them out before the Imperial Majesty of heaven. Blessed thought! It emboldens us in our approach to the Mercy Seat, and calms our sorrow-riven souls as the harp of the youthful David soothed the spirit of the troubled Saul.

Moreover, we must look to Jesus as the *Philanthropist of the race*—man's best friend. In the highest sense we pronounce—

"God's Son to be the brother and the friend
Of spirit everywhere ;"

but His connection with humanity is more endearing and intimate. It was for the insurgent occupants of this disloyal world that He became incarnate. He was anointed to preach the gospel to the poor; He was sent to heal the broken-hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives; the

recovering of sight to the blind ; to set at liberty them that are bruised ; and to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. His exuberant love embraced all. His expressive words were addressed to all. His remedial scheme of mercy was designed for all. He looked on man simply as *man*. His mission was to the universal family, in every conceivable condition. Unlike others who have striven to ameliorate the wretched state of humanity, He required no prerequisites on the part of the sufferers. In the plenitude of His benevolence, He came down to the lowest grade. He delighted to transform tears into smiles everywhere. He, above all others, could employ the language of the Roman poet, "I am a man : nothing of all that pertains to man do I deem foreign to me." In human sensibilities he identified himself with the sad and deserted. With unutterable benignity He responded freely to all the children of want or woe who craved His interposition. Those who were privileged to come into loving contact with Him found Him a sincere, powerful, sympathising, truthful, trustworthy, and constant friend. His was a life of heaven-born charity in perpetual motion. He was the perfection of benevolence. All developments of charity among men are but emanations from Him, as earth's multiform hues spring from the pure sunlight. And now, though exalted far above all principalities and powers, Jesus is still an ever-present Friend. His disciples enjoy His company whilst outside their Father's house. They discern Him with them in temptation, toil, sickness,

adversity, death ; in every hour of sunshine, and in every season of darkness ; when the harp-strings are attuned to mercy, and when the chords are swept by the blast of judgment. They feel Him present as much in the quiet hamlet as within the precincts of the Holy City ; as much on Alpine summits as on Olivet slopes ; as much on the embosomed waters of Cumberland as on those of Gennesaret. All places may be hallowed by His endearing, invisible but felt, presence. Ay, it is the privilege of the followers of Christ to press to their heart the promise, "Lo, I am with you *all days*, even unto the end of the world."

This Jesus, who is the living standard to which our lives are to conform—the fullest manifestation of God—the sole, sufficient Redeemer of the world—the untiring Intercessor for the creature—the unchanging Friend of sinners—*this Jesus* is the altogether lovely One, who is pre-eminently worthy of the creature's attention. Earth has fair specimens of mere humanity—men and women whom we cannot know, without endearment to, and respect for them. One is beautiful, another intelligent, a third influential, a fourth affectionate, a fifth faithful, a sixth wealthy—but where is the mortal combining all these ? There may be beauty, but the want of fidelity makes you unhappy. There may be power where the absence of prudence renders its possessor a bane. There may be sympathy when the lack of means limits its operations. But all these qualities, brightened to infinitude, cluster in plenitude in Christ ; whilst

His Divinity gives an efficacy, a fulness, and firmness to all He has said or done. His is an original character. The Divine in Jesus is not the result of patient improvement and successive growth, it is introduced to the world perfect from the first. The Sun of Righteousness rose on time full-orbed, and retains—as He ever will—His unwaning, perennial, and supreme glory. He aptly described himself in the words, “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.” In the construction of the Church, He is the “*corner-stone* ;” in superintending its erection, He is the “*wise Master-builder* ;” in conducting His people, He is the “*Great Shepherd* ;” in worship, He is the “*Great High Priest* ;” in dominion, He is the “*King of Kings*.” He is Light to our darkened minds ; Life to our inanimate affections ; Truth to our fickle thoughts ; Wisdom to our wayward judgment ; Bread to our hungry hearts ; Rest to our weary souls ; Author and Finisher of our faith ; our “*all in all* ;” a paragon of excellency ; a gem of the richest and rarest worth. He surpasses our utmost conception, and to describe Him beggars human speech. Let every knee bow before such a Saviour ; let every heart lie low at His feet ; let every, *every* eye be fastened on His ineffable beauty, and every tongue proclaim His praise !

THE
ACT OF SEEING JESUS IS FEASIBLE.

“ Free was the offer, free to all, of life
And salvation ; but the proud of heart,
Because 'twas free, would not accept ; and still
To merit wished ; and choosing, thus unshipped,
Uncompassed, unprovisioned, and bestormed,
To swim a sea of breadth immeasurable,
They scorned the goodly bark, whose wings the breath
Of God's Eternal Spirit filled for heaven,
That stopped to take them in, and so were lost.”

“ Look unto me, and be ye saved ; all the ends of the earth.”

ISAIAH.

CHAPTER II.

THE ACT OF SEEING JESUS IS FEASIBLE.

“Thy Creatures wrong thee, O thou Sovereign good !
Thou art not loved, because not understood ;
This grieves me most, that vain pursuits beguile
Ungrateful men, regardless of Thy smile.

“Frail beauty and false honour are adored ;
While Thee they scorn, and trifle with Thy word ;
Pass unconcern'd a Saviour's sorrows by,
And hunt their ruin with a zeal to die.”

MADAME GUYON.

EVERY living production of the Divine Artificer possesses an instinct or inclination to sustain, develope, and improve that life with which it is entrusted. The gnarled oak of the forest, lifting its bared branches to the heavens, or spreading its rustling foliage before the breeze ; the passion-flower bedecking the verandah with its short-lived beauties ; the modest daisy, trodden down by the foot of the busy swain ; all vegetable organisms will strike their deep-set or tiny roots, open their porous fibres and imbibe the ether and vital juices which the soil, the water, and the air may impart, and diffusing that nutriment, produce leaves, flowers, and fruits. The bleating flocks, the grazing herds,

the free-tenants of the water, and the minstrels of the air, are endowed with an appetite which constrains them to seek the nourishment necessary for the continuance of vitality. Now, this inclination in the vegetable, or appetite in the animal kingdom, stands in relation to the owner thereof as *desire* does to man. Indeed, the Psalmist has designated that tendency in the irrational beings and in man—the lord of creation—by the same name, saying, “God openeth His hand, and satisfieth the *desire* of every living thing.” The Great Teacher, also, referring to our spiritual longings, employed the animal appetite as figurative, saying, “Blessed are they who do *hunger* and *thirst* after righteousness.”

Desire springs from a consciousness of vacuity. It is the outgoing of the heart, in search of what it has not, to supply its emptiness. Or, as Locke defines it, “it is the uneasiness a man finds in himself upon the absence of anything whose present enjoyment carries the idea of delight with it.” Very extensive, therefore, is the circumference of desires native to the soul of man. The spirit thirsts for knowledge—thirsts to sip of every fount of truth, and the desire increases as it is gratified. The mind scrutinises the sublime, explores the mighty past, peers into the distant future, threads the labyrinths of creation, contemplates the dealings of Deity, and aspires to sweep the whole firmament of truth. It thirsts for happiness—thirsts for sweet, abiding serenity, for calm

sunshine in the heart and home, for melody without discords, friendship without foes, work without weariness. It longs for immortality—longs to exist for ever, to be for ever known, for ever knowing, and for ever blessed. These only skirt the wide circle of desires. But the existence of such yearnings in the breast of man implies that appropriate satisfaction is provided. The creatures of earth, over whom man has dominion, find the satisfaction of their desires. Surely, then, the vast capacities and cravings of our souls may obtain supply from some source. But whither must man turn to discover it? From what quarter, and through what channel, is it to be expected?—a question this, which every member of the human family has asked, is asking, will ask, but to which, unfortunately, men are too prone to accept a delusive, unfounded, destructive reply. With the multitude, the aspirations implanted by our Infinite Author are employed in an unholy, unprofitable direction. Not a few, alas, are they to whom Job's words apply, "Man drinketh iniquity like water." Impatiently, with eagerness, and without control do they devour the forbidden fruit, till they make the lamentable confession of Lord Byron,—

"My days are in the yellow leaf,
The flower, the fruit of life is gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone."

Many, too, are they who, though not in search of that

which is absolutely evil, are seeking satisfaction from those things which are not positively good; things which the Wise man declares are, "Vanity, and vexation of spirit." Others there are, thank God, whose eyes are directed heavenward, who, speaking from the inner chambers of their being, cry, "We desire to fear Thy name;" "The desire of our soul is to Thy name;" we "have longed after Thy precepts." These persons have found that a sunlit landscape will not cheer the drooping heart; that sweetest melody will not calm the troubled spirit; that the fruit of the vine will not exhilarate the downcast soul; that no change in surroundings, no earth-born scene or sound can satisfy; that a God-formed heart can find its rest only in a living God; that the hunger and thirst of the inner man will not be relieved by the teachings of the sage, the trappings of state, or the treasures of this sublunary sphere. They have ascertained that the only suitable food is the "Bread of Life," and the "Living Water." *This* Jesus is to the soul of man. Affection's tendrils, feeling for an object around which to entwine, meet all they seek in Him. All hail! thou longed-for Saviour.

How cheering to the wan captive in his lonely dungeon is the message of reprieve and manumission! How welcome to the broken-hearted, desponding mother are the tidings of returning health in her darling infant! The sound of the gurgling stream to the parched and perishing pilgrim—

the sight of sweet flowers to the wayworn, weary traveller amid desolation—the tones of a familiar voice, or strains of a national air to the visitor of a strange land, are wonderfully exhilarating. Much more acceptable, however, is the message, “Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world!” “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.” *That*, to man weary and heavy-laden, with a heart overwhelmed with a consciousness of guilt, and a soul yearning for God, is a glad evangel, and sounds like music over the troubled waters of the human heart.

But is it possible to find Jesus now? He is no more a sojourner upon earth. Great, mysterious, and ever-memorable changes have passed upon Him. He struggled with infinite sorrow, entered an awful Aceldama, vanquished the grim powers of death, burst the borrowed grave, supernaturally appeared to His disciples, pierced the clouds of earth, and now occupies His kingly seat in the centre of all the secrets and splendours of the Universe. Are the words, “Look unto me,” applicable still? Can any now say “We see Jesus?” Yes, the wooing, life-instilling accents of invitation and entreaty are intended to echo down the vast corridor of ages, and fall on our ears, dear reader.

We may see Jesus *in the Scriptures*. The whole Book presents us with a life-like portraiture, an authorized biography of Immanuel. The Bible is “a tent in which the Everlasting tabernacles for a night.” It is the chariot of

gold in which the Lord's Anointed rides. The *Old Testament* has been likened to the garments of the king, smelling of myrrh, aloes, and cassia. Throughout the Historical, Ceremonial, and Prophetical portions of Holy Writ, Jesus is the name that bejewels the whole. We see Him like a thread of gold running through the whole web of truth. He cannot be eliminated from the Records without their destruction ensuing. He is to them what the sun is to the astronomical system, and what the human heart is to the physical organism.

But when we approach the *New Testament* we have more perfect views of Christ. He is there before us as the unchanging patron, living embodiment, and peerless exemplar of truth, nobility, and beauty. We see Him, more or less, in the different stages of life—in helpless infancy, developing youth, and ripened manhood. It is true, there is comparative reticence on the part of the Evangelists, in relation to the early life of our Lord. Curiosity has often longed to penetrate those thirty years which are almost hidden from the gaze. Indeed, several attempts were made in the dawn of the Christian era to furnish that which the inspired writers withheld. Various pretended histories of Christ's life and teaching appeared. Among the apochryphal gospels there is "the gospel of the infancy," crowded with spurious legends concerning Jesus. But the language of a recent sceptical author* will fully express our opinion

* M. Renan.

of these valueless and absurd inventions,—“They are insipid and puerile amplifications, having the canonical gospels for their base, and adding nothing thereto of any value.” We have recorded in our Scriptures all relating to Christ’s early years that could prove of lasting service to the world. The period of His public life—the three years of His ministry—are most important to humanity. Into that space of time were condensed the labours of *many* a complete life-history; and the stirring transactions of those three years of active and passive service are fully narrated. We see Christ in the frequent vicissitudes of an earthly career—in the wilderness, suffering temptation—in the social circle, identifying himself with human joys—on the hill-top, enjoying heavenly manifestations—at the scene of sorrow, mingling his tears with those of the mourners—on the mountain-slope, engaged in devotion—in the Holy City, preaching salvation—by the sea-side, working miracles—within Gethsemane’s doleful enclosure, emptying the cup of bitterness—at the judgment-hall, unjustly condemned—on the cross, bearing our sins—at Bethany, breathing energy into the hearts of His disciples—and then passing within the veil of the Holy of Holies. The Christ of revelation stands before us as a marvellous historical reality. We cannot look on His features, as they are drawn by the pencil of the sacred artists, without feeling that they were painted from the life. With ignorant men as the penmen contemplating Jesus from four different stand-points,

writing at different dates, who that looks on the harmony of statement which makes the *one* biography, can believe that the Scripture accounts are fabrications? Ideals are very rare, and are always the product of extraordinary genius. Remembering who the Evangelists were—poor and illiterate men—it was a mental impossibility that such a character should be the creation of their own minds. Remembering the impiety and corruption that abounded in Judea in their day, it is absurdity to affirm they copied the transparent character from any men then living. And surely none will venture to say the biographers made *themselves* the archetypes, and portrayed their *own* characters; yet to this we shall be brought, if we deny that the superhuman and sublime life drawn in the Gospels was not actually embodied in Christ Jesus.

“It is indeed true, as a Saint who knew Christianity from the life once said, in his heart-winning way, ‘one might well consent to be branded and broken on the wheel, merely for the idea of such a character as Christ, and if anyone should be able to mock and deride, he must be insane. Every man, whose heart is in a right state, will lie in the dust, and rejoice and adore.’ It is true; even as a bare idea, the spiritual image of Jesus which the Bible holds out to us is the most dignified and the most precious which is known to our race. It is an idea for which one may well be justified in offering up his life. For, we may boldly assert, this idea is the most sublime to which, in the

province of Humanity and Religion, the human mind has been raised. It is the jewel of Humanity, and whoever knowingly tarnishes or disfigures it, commits an outrage against the majesty of the heaven-born soul of man in its most beauteous manifestations. Let it be a fable, it is still the most noble truth which has been either received or communicated by the human mind, and preponderates, even as a fable, over a thousand writers of ordinary experience. But it is not a fable; it is not a bare idea; for the man who was able to produce from his own invention such a character, such a pattern, must himself have possessed this greatness of soul, if we deny that he observed it in another. We must transfer the spiritual and moral greatness of Jesus to His biographer, if we deny it to Himself.”* Without ability, without materials, and without motives for fabrication, on the part of the Evangelists, we are obliged to accept their own testimony, “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.” These things “are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: and that, believing, ye might have life through His name.”

Open the grand old volume, reader, and see Jesus—see Him there as the only way of access unto the Eternal—as the only Truth saving in its tendency—as the only Life spiritually vitalizing in its influence and lasting in its duration—as the “all in all” of our graces, hopes, enterprizes, and ordinances.

* Ullmann.

Be it remembered, however, that you will see the Saviour in His Word, in proportion to the preparation of the spiritual vision. When the Risen-One walked with the favoured two to Emmaus, He opened their understandings to know the Scriptures. With natural darkness of mind, and lingering proneness to look through false media—through pre-conceived notions, systems, and commentaries—we need, each, to offer the ancient prayer, “Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.” We must not expect any full, true, heartfelt understanding of the Holy Book if we approach it without craving the Spirit’s light. Christ is in the Scriptures, and it is our duty to look for Him in every page. If we see Him not, the defect is with us, and not with the truth. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. Everything needful for our illumination, comfort, and sanctification is revealed. No supplementary disclosures are needed, neither will any additional faculties be bestowed. All that is required to convey to our minds ideas of Christ’s character and work, or to our hearts conformity to His image, is placed at our disposal. What is now absolutely necessary is, the improvement, elevation, development of the faculties we possess in connection with the truth we own. Rebecca taught her son, Jacob, the quickest way to obtain the patriarchal blessing. The Holy Spirit must teach us how to discern Christ in the Written Word.

We can see Jesus now *with the eye of faith*. By this

spiritual vision we can look back over the silent centuries to the secluded garden at the foot of Olivet, and to the consecrated height of Calvary, around which cluster such hallowed associations ; we can see Him carrying *our* sins, “wounded for *our* transgressions, bruised for *our* iniquities,” grasping in His trembling hand the bitter cup of *our* woe, travelling in the greatness of His strength beneath *our* burden. By this inner eye we can peer across the fields of immensity, pass by the shining ranks of angelic attendants, and see not only what Christ *was*, but what He *is* with His many crowns upon His brow, and His many ministers to do His pleasure. We can bring Him near to us—look into His heart, and discern the strong pulsations of His affection for us—behold our names engraven on the palms of His hands, and see His eye of compassion and vigilant care ever resting on us. We can realize as much the presence of our Saviour as the “beloved disciple” did when permitted to lean upon His bosom. This is the “looking unto Jesus” to which special attention is called in the Inspired Record, and to which you, dear reader, are now asked to bend your thoughts.

Perhaps no figure conveys a more full, true, and beautiful idea of faith than that of the natural sight. “Sight is the noblest sense ; it is quick—we can look from earth to heaven in a moment ; it is large—we can see the hemisphere of the heavens at one view ; it is sure and certain—in hearing we may be deceived ; and lastly, it is the most

affecting sense. Even so, faith is the quickest, the largest, the most certain, the most affecting grace; like an eagle in the clouds, at one view it sees Christ in heaven, and looks down upon the world; it looks backwards and forwards, it sees things past, present, and to come."

The bodily organ, when performing its passive work of receiving upon its tiny lens objects of nature or art, is not the subject of thought. The spectator forgets himself in the objects exposed to his view. His attention is transferred to some person or thing on which his eye fastens. Just thus must man act in relation to Christ. He must look, away from himself, simply and entirely to what Jesus *is* and *has done*. He must turn from his own integrity, sufferings, sins, and repentance to the Saviour *only*. Ah, here is the secret why many tarry long without a sense of God's forgiving love. Their thoughts are engaged with self; their attention is divided; their look is not wholly to Him who died, but somewhat to their own worthiness or unworthiness, their own sanctity or sin.

No act can be more easily performed than that of looking. The sensitive organ performs its marvellous functions without effort. Seeing is no laborious process. We can be so employed, for many long hours, without sense of weariness. So nothing can be more simple than the exercise of faith. The Saviour has not called man to the performance of some complex, laborious, painful task. The prophet has not directed the sinner to do some great

thing. The Syrian leper came with his horses and his chariot, and stood at the door with Elisha, anxious for the Tishbite's counsel. "And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean. But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned, and went away in a rage." How many have acted likewise? How many have made the simplicity of Gospel terms their stumbling-block. By halting from such reason, they as good as say, "Lord, I do not believe that Thou art gracious and merciful enough to save my soul on such liberal terms;" or, "Saviour, Thou art not capable of doing all the work of my salvation. Thou needest my finite effort to help in Thine infinite purposes. I do not believe Thy blood can cleanse from *all* sin. I must rid myself of some of the more glaring and grievous of my iniquities." Happy he, who, with the docility of a child, submits to the Heavenly Parent's terms, and credits the Father's word!

There are degrees of strength in the physical sight. Some persons find no difficulty in gazing steadily, and for a long period, on objects of surpassing brilliancy, whilst

others can scarcely endure a passing glance. One can examine minute articles with the keenest observation, whilst another can only permit the outline of the object to shape itself upon the retina. But each can see: and the strength or weakness of the vision does not affect the object observed. Similarly there are degrees of strength in the spiritual eye-sight. One has faith only as a grain of mustard-seed, another has it so vigorous, so matured, so invincible, that he can pierce the darkest cloud and remove the highest mountain. But the Saviour is the same. He is not impotent to him of little faith, and sovereign to him of sturdy heart. He is able to save to the uttermost *all*—whether mean or mighty in their confidence—who come unto God by Him. It is Jesus who saves, and not faith, as it is the medicinal draught that strengthens, and not the trembling hand that lifts it to the lips. An infant's eye can read the smile of a king's countenance, and the tiny hand of a babe could grasp the precious Koh-i-noor, or draw an electric spark from the well-charged battery, so the feeblest look to Jesus will convey the light of His reconciled face to the heart; and even the trembling reaching forth of our souls' trust will put us in possession of the Pearl of Great Price. Nowhere in the heaven-given records do you read that salvation is exclusively for those of strong faith—for those only who can smile on the deepest misfortune, and walk with firm step and steadfast heart to the martyr's grave. Nowhere are you taught that spiritual joy is the

portion *only* of God's Habbakuks, who can rejoice when there are no blossoms on the fig-tree, no clusters on the vine, no fruit in the fields, no flocks in the fold, no herds in the stalls, and when the cold wan face of poverty enters the home-circle. Blessed fact! the "Bread of life" is for the babe in Christ, as well as for the perfect man. Pardon, and peace, and paradise are for "*whosoever* believeth in Him." Let none be discouraged who desire to see Jesus, for the act of beholding Him is feasible to all.

On one occasion certain Greeks came up from the provinces to the metropolis of Judea, to join in the celebration of the Passover. When in Jerusalem they received information that Jesus of Nazareth, the avowed Messiah, was present at the feast, and that He had been welcomed to the city with triumph and gladness. Doubtless strange and conflicting stories had reached them concerning the God-man, and now, finding themselves in the immediate vicinity of the Lord's Anointed, they determined, as far as practicable, to avail themselves of the opportunity for satisfying their minds, dissipating their doubts, marshalling their convictions, and framing their views respecting Him. Knowing Philip to be one of Christ's disciples, they came first to him, as anxious souls now flee to a minister or Christian friend, asking necessary information for the fulfilment of their desires. It may be deemed certain that it was not a mere glance of the Saviour, but a close and friendly conversation they wished. Had they sought

only a glimpse of Jesus there was no need of their consulting Philip. They had only to wait in the highway for a brief season, and they would soon behold Him who went about doing good. They earnestly desired to hear from His own lips some of the living words of wonder which had been reported of Him, and to witness some of the irresistible evidences of His Divine mission. They might have stayed away from the Lord, and, till their death-hour, theorized, doubted, cavilled. They might have given credence to cruel and truthless statements, which the enemies of God were putting into wide-spread circulation. They might have preferred Sybarite ease to sincere, self-denying inquiry after truth. But they acted another and a nobler part—that of intelligent, reasonable, honest men. They behaved as responsible beings—as those who, foreseeing the last assize, were conscious their souls would find no freedom from punishment, because another man was righteous—as men who felt they must finally give an account of themselves to God. Their cry was, “Sir, *we would see Jesus;*” “we are not satisfied with the fact that others have held communion with Him, and have reported according to their experience. Their statements may be reliable, and we cannot presume to doubt them, but the matter is so momentous that we must see Him for ourselves.” Religion with them was an individual, a personal thing—a matter of experience. Just this must it be now. An abundance of testimony has reached us. Prophets and

righteous men desired to see the things which we see and have not seen them, and hear the things which we hear and have not heard them. We have the records of the personal friends, pupils, and partisans of the Redeemer; the recorded Christian experience of our forefathers; the testimony of living saints. From these sources we have been reminded that Jesus was "in the bosom of the Father," before all worlds; that in the fulness of his affection he stooped to earth, and "took the lowest place," in order to redeem; that with unequalled agony He trod the wine-press alone; that, as a King, His diadem was a crown of thorns, with blood-drops for rubies, and His proclamation the insulting scroll nailed over his drooping head on the cross of Calvary; that by a life of spotless holiness and a death of sacrifice He procured eternal redemption for all who believe; that He has ascended to the right hand of the Father, and waits with willingness to welcome all who come to Him; that the most reprobate may find pardon and peace in Him; and that His spiritual, supporting, sanctifying presence is enjoyed by all those who love him. Nevertheless, it is our undeniable *privilege* to test by our experience the soundness of these assertions. "Religion in its very essence is a thing of *trial*, not merely of evidence; and all the evidence in the world will not convince a man without the trial. If a man is not willing to make the trial, he will remain unconvinced, till experience convinces him by his eternal ruin. He

will know the value of the soul, by the soul's eternal loss. Religion must be a matter of original, individual, we might almost say lonely experiment. The awakening step may be evidence, *must* be evidence of some kind, but the conviction and conversion are experience; the coming to Christ and the assurance of His mercy and grace are experience. A careless man strays into the house of God, and hears an awakening, pungent sermon from Richard Baxter. He hears of things, which, if true, are adapted to distress him; and it is *evidence* to which he is listening. He is awakened at first on the evidence of the preacher. But this is not belief. This evidence is given, is applied, is spread before him, to induce him to make the trial for himself, to induce him to come and see. He hears that he is lost, that Christ can save him, and only Christ, and that he must go to Christ in penitence and prayer. He may be alarmed, but, until he goes to Christ, he cannot tell for a certainty, from his own experience, the truth of the preaching; unless, indeed, he believe with the heart in God's Word, which no man does with his heart but by going to Christ. He must make this experiment. He might spend his life in arguing whether the things of the preaching are true; but if he will go himself to Christ, he can tell at once." He who neglects this personal effort to see Jesus deprives himself of an invaluable birthright, and disparages a boon that angels prize.

Mayhap that, under sense of your sinfulness in the sight

of God, you deem yourself unfit to approach the world's Redeemer, and think in your despondency that you are too great a sinner to be saved. God forbid that I should diminish the enormity of your guilt, or abate one jot or tittle of the atrocity of sin in your estimation. Man's culpability cannot be portrayed in hues too sombre—in words too solemn. Let me rather turn your attention to the Atonement. Your malady is great, but the remedy is greater. Your unworthiness is finite, but Christ's worth and work are infinite. Millions of immortals now enjoy the good things put forth by the sun : they live by its heat, see by its light, and are gladdened by its enlivening influence ; but were the world's inhabitants increased a thousand-fold, the monarch of the day, whose visits have been familiar to us from childhood, would still be sufficient for them all. So, though thousands of transgressors have been rescued from eternal ruin, and elevated to undying glories by the power of the Cross, millions more may experience its saving influence, and all the world may find redemption co-extensive with ruin. If the one sacrifice of Calvary satisfied Eternal Justice, why, dear reader, is it not sufficient to satisfy you ? The wrath of God was so fully appeased by it, His justice so fully satisfied, that there is no bar to re-admission into His favour, and the enjoyment of the privileges purchased by it, but man's unbelief. The blood of Christ is a stream of which all men may drink, an ocean wherein all may bathe. If an Israelite perished by

the biting of the fiery serpent, it was not for want of a remedy in God's institution, but from wilfulness in himself. The antitype answers to the type, and wants no more a sufficiency to procure a spiritual good, than that to effect the cure of the body. He is, therefore, called the Saviour of the world. When the Apostle says, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe with thy heart, thou shalt be saved," he speaks to every man who shall hear that sentence. If all the men in the world were united to Him by faith, there would not be any more required of Christ for their salvation than what He hath already effected; for it is a sacrifice of infinite value, and infinity knows no limits. Since it was sufficient to satisfy infinity justice, it is sufficient to save an infinite number; and the virtue of it in saving one argues a virtue in it to save all upon the same conditions. If men, therefore, perish, it is not for want of value, or virtue, or acceptableness in this sacrifice; but for want of answering the terms upon which the enjoyment of the benefit of it is proposed. If a man will shut his eyes against the light of the sun, it argues an obstinacy on the part of the person, not any defect in the sun itself.*

Call to remembrance the characters of some whose sins have been as scarlet—who were prodigies of iniquity—who had loved their evils with fervent fondness, and lived long

* *Vide* Charnock's "Discourse on the Acceptableness of Christ's Death."

in the corrosive indulgence thereof, who had been rescued and are in heaven as monuments of divine grace. Think of Mary Magdalene, Zaccheus, and the dying thief; of Peter avowing his love to Christ and intentions to cling to Him, then denying Him with oaths and curses; of Saul persecuting, even to the death, the primitive disciples of the Lord. Are you worse than they were? Have you forgotten, also, that the Redeemer staunched an issue of blood that had troubled the sufferer for twelve years—that He uplifted the poor woman who had been bowed together for eighteen years—that He healed an impotent man who had been the subject of an infirmity thirty-eight years! He who could work such miracles on men's bodies, when on earth, now He is so highly exalted can work far greater miracles on men's souls. Let not the length of time you have resisted the grace of God deter you. Though you have been twice thirty-eight years spiritually impotent, Christ can heal. Neither let repeated relapses into sin, after holy resolution, prevent your turning to the Saviour. If a man fall over the side of a ship into the swelling sea, he is said to rise three times, and then sink beyond recovery. Thank God, it is not so with our souls. Aggravated and repeated as may be our crimes, Immanuel will save. He has taught His disciples to forgive their brother "seventy times seven," and surely as His thoughts are infinitely above our thoughts, and His ways inconceivably above our ways, the extent of His mercy is infinitely

beyond the dimensions of ours. Away with all vain thoughts of fitness or unfitness. It is not with the spiritual as it is with the physical organism. In the body there is a *vis medicatrix*, a work of self-healing. An invalid often becomes victorious over his diseases by the strength of nature. The constitution being good, and the health having been previously guarded, he throws off his ailment by his innate energy, rather than by the potency of any remedy applied. But there is nothing of inherent goodness about your soul. There is no natural effort to rise to health and honour. Self-development will be the development of sin. The work of spiritual restoration and reformation is the work of Christ alone. You are sensible of your own inability to find Jesus. So have been many more before you. Some of the philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome, though possessing little light compared with that you enjoy, yet felt and confessed the Divine aid for attaining and retaining the good. The celebrated Socrates once affirmed "that wheresoever virtue comes, it seems to be the fruit of a Divine dispensation." His illustrious disciple Plato, observed, "Virtue is not to be taught but by the assistance of God." And even more to the point are the words of Seneca, "It is God that comes to men, yea more, He enters into them, for *no mind becomes truly good but by His assistance.*" Yes, no lips could ever truthfully sing, "Thou hast covered me with the robes of righteousness, and the garment of salvation," unless they had first sighed,

“Unclean! unclean!” Every heavenward pilgrim has been abased in Egyptian darkness, before he has come to a Goshen of light. Every heart has been conscious of its unworthiness and weakness, previously to its repose on the justifying righteousness of Christ. But in this state of helplessness a helper is found. The very supernatural assistance, of the need of which the ancient philosophers were convinced, is provided by the Divine Friend of man. You are not left to yourself. The Holy Spirit, who has enlightened the eyes of your understanding, is with you. He maketh intercession within—He points the moral vision to the “great sight”—He conducts the weeping penitent to the Mercy Seat.

Moreover, He who thus assists you in your enfeebled, prostrate condition, is He who reduced you to that state. He who heals your wounds, is He who tore from your conscience the triple mail in which it had been enclosed, and lodged the shafts of truth, which have subdued your opposition to Jesus. He who conducts you to the Physician of souls, is He who held the mirror of the Word before you till you had discerned how the virus of sin had disfigured and defiled you. The sorrowing prodigal and the accepted son are equally the workmanship of the Good Spirit. It is He who does for man what the angel did for Joshua, “clothes him with change of raiment,” and “sets a fair mitre upon his head.” This should be encouragement to you. It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do. From

first to last—from the dawning desire to see Jesus to the unveiled sight of Him in heaven—all, all is of Divine Grace—all is the operation of the Omnipotent One. And yet man must exert himself as though everything were dependent on him. Divine Sovereignty and human responsibility are wedded in Revelation, though the union of these two is among the arcana which mortal minds will never solve in this land of shadow. The first is there, preserving us from despair; the second is there, preventing presumption or indifference.

You cannot make or repeal the laws of your country; that is the work of the Sovereign and the Government; but you *can* petition the Queen and Parliament for the object you desire. As an invalid, you cannot rise from your couch of sickness, but you can solicit aid from the strong arm of your attendant. You are unable to construct a plant like that which ornaments your conservatory, the leaves and petals of which “show some touch in freckle, streak, and stain of God’s unrivalled pencil,” but you can sow the seed, and water, and watch the tender flower. So, though

“The transformation of apostate man
From fool to wise, from earthly to divine,
Is work for Him who made him;”

yet *you* can covet and eagerly call for the exercise of Divine energy. Bartimeus could not see the passing Saviour, but he could cry loudly and long, “Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me!” This is your work :—not

to rely on valueless efforts toward self-amendment ; not to place a jot of confidence in adherence to pharisaic forms ; not to think of merit as the result of rigid morality, but in humility to besiege God's throne of exhaustless mercy for the impartation of spiritual vision. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

But let not your desires after Christ be characterized by weakness, let them be *all-absorbing* ; not like the gentle zephyr, scarcely stirring the downy wings of the dandelion seed, but like the hurricane, bending the giant trees of the forest ; not like the silvery ripple of the summer sea, moving not a shell upon the beach, but the raging billow, furiously beating against and moulding the ancient rocks ; not like the smouldering spark, but the devouring flame. Your desires must not exist like the wish to leave the "City of Destruction," indulged by "Pliable," which succumbed to the first difficulty, but like the determination in the mind of "Christian," which no danger could dispel, no discouragement baffle, no conflict destroy. Your solicitude must not be marked by a feeble grasp, as in the case of the young Ruler, who went away from Jesus sorrowful, but by invincible energy, as in the case of the afflicted woman, who was resolved to touch Christ, even in the crowd.

Let not your desires after Christ be inert, but *active*. Aim to arouse them to vigorous operation. Let the buzzing, busy bee of the hive be your type. Suffer not your good yearnings to recline with the sluggard. Be not like

some timid, torpid drones in life's way, who keep at home and wish for honour, wealth, or wisdom, without exertion to secure the same; but like the man of energy, who diligently searches for that which he covets. Let not your desires resemble Balaam, when he exclaimed, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his;" but Paul, when he wrote, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after * * I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." It is truly said, "The desire of the slothful killeth him, for his hands refuse to labour."

Neither permit your desires to be only occasional; make them *constant*. Let them not ingloriously abandon the purpose, scared by the first lion in the way. Make them such as will "pluck success even from the spear-proof crest of rugged danger." Let them not be like the fire of the domestic hearth, kindled when circumstances demand; but like that on the consecrated altar of old, never to go out. Let them not be typified by the flashing meteor, which delights for a brief season, and glides for ever from human ken; but by the orbs of heaven, which permanently shine. Be you not like Agrippa, almost persuaded to be a Christian; but like John, faithful under the darkest cloud and in the shadow of the cross.

All-absorbing, active, and constant should be the desires cherished in relation to the Saviour. We do not ask for the weak, fruitless, inconstant wish which stirs the mind

under the arousing call of some Boanerges, or the wooing strains of some Barnabas—which exists during the Sabbath services, and expires when the hours of worship are past—or that is kindled by the warm fires of affliction's furnace, to grow extinct when the bloom of health mantles the countenance. We ask for a settled, earnest, irrepressible longing of the mind which takes up the strains of Jacob at Jabbok, and says, "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me"—the yearning of heart which brings a man to the throne of exhaustless grace with undaunted persistency—which, when difficulties say, "hold thy peace," shall, Bartimeus-like, cry "the more a great deal"—which, when heaven "answers not a word," shall, like the woman of Canaan, convert the discouragement into a weapon with which to gain the victory. "Easiness of desire," says Jeremy Taylor, "is a great enemy to the success of a good man's prayers. It must be an intent, zealous, busy, operative prayer. For consider what a huge indecency it is, that a man should speak to God for a thing that he values not. Our prayers upbraid our spirits, when we beg tamely for those things for which we ought to die; which are more precious than imperial sceptres, richer than the spoils of the sea, or the treasures of Indian hills." Let a man cherish such eager, active, persevering desire after Jesus, and he will speedily discover that the result thereof is the sweet still beaming upon his spiritual vision of the glorious, forgiving, far-reaching light of Christ's countenance, affording

peace to his heart, and shedding beauty around his life. Let him refrain from such desires, and he is guilty of an injustice to himself. It is man's unspeakable privilege to taste and see that the Lord is good—to test the precious promises which cluster so abundantly in Holy Writ—to feel the arms of Omnipotence uplifting—the eye of Omniscience guiding—and the inexhaustible affection of the Infinite encircling the heart and life. These blessings multitudes have enjoyed and reported thereon to us. Nevertheless, it is our transcendent privilege and abiding duty, personally, experimentally to know them—to satisfy our own minds, and save our own souls by a sight of Christ.

Think not, reader, to extenuate your conduct as a sinner on the ground of worldly circumstances. Do not imagine that if you were situated as your friends, favoured with pious relatives, freed from harrassing cares, blessed with health to attend the means of grace, and with more time to devote to spiritual concerns, you should be able to see Jesus, and continue gazing at Him. Such thoughts are idle and illusory. Did you occupy the position and enjoy the mercies you covet, you would possess the same heart and the same objections. Undoubtedly, man is influenced to action by motive, and the motives vary according to the circumstances in which the man is placed. But God has made man a rational being—a being capable of controlling his impulses, choosing his course of action, and curbing his affections. The Divine Author has equipped the soul with

a power to overleap and transcend all outward persuasives. If you cannot lay a firm, manly grasp on your *present* circumstances, and make them your servants and auxiliaries, then rest assured that you would see Jesus with no more facility, and make no greater approximation to the likeness of God, were you to occupy the high vantage ground which your imagination pictures. Amongst the ransomed hosts of heaven are multitudes who have sought the Lord amid the greatest difficulties; who by the free, indomitable operation of the will, have fought their onward and upward course, in spite of obstacles as formidable as the sons of Anak, and have won for themselves a guerdon of undying glory. All now living may go and do likewise. The new and living way by which the wicked may return to God, and enter the city of rest, is accessible to all. Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free, the prince encompassed by plenty, and the starveling asking alms, may find the way to glory cleared of all barriers. The heart that throbs under the beggar's gabardine, and that which flutters under the imperial purple, may alike enjoy a transforming sight of the Saviour. Ay, you may take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth. You may go to any and every spot where the sun sheds his golden beams, the dew-drop refreshes with its glassy moisture, the fresh breeze kisses the mountain's brow, dimples the ocean's bosom, and covers with the rouge of health the cheek of the traveller, but you shall not find a single descendant of Adam who

may not look and live. It is because all obstacles are removed—because there are no preclusions—that the ambassadors of the Cross are so earnest and constant in reiterating the words of their Master, “Come unto Me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” “Whosoever cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out.”

As a sight of Christ is feasible to all, so is it *always* feasible. There are sunny scenes on earth on which we would fain often fasten our gaze. There are “mighty mountains, the masonry of God,” and beautiful waterfalls vocal with melody, and winding rivers disclosing fresh attractions at every turn, but distance separates us, or business imposes a barrier, and we can look upon them only once a year at the best. There are grand displays of Heaven’s wondrous power and wisdom in the skies, but, though we watch many weary nights, we are gratified only when the God of nature permits. There are dignitaries of earth whose faces can be seldom seen by the masses, and public men of wisdom and skill the benefits of whose experience and research we can only occasionally enjoy. But the Divine Philanthropist may be *always* seen. He has no special hours in which to listen to the complaints of his clients. He may be seen at day-break, when the first faint sunbeams are struggling above the horizon, and tipping the hill-tops, as Mary beheld Him at the sepulchre. He

may be seen at noon-day, when the sun is culminating, as Saul of Tarsus experienced on the road to Damascus. He may be seen at eventide, when the flowers fold their beauties, the clustering stars emerge from their hiding places, and sweet serenity reigns around, as when He met His disciples, and showed them His hands and His side. He may be seen when the curtains of night are gathered round the face of nature, and mankind are lapped in sleep, as the history of Nicodemus and the Philippian gaoler proves. When calmly awaiting a blessing in the appointed place and manner, as in the case of Thomas when he cried "My Lord and my God!"—when expectation is disappointed, and efforts appear fruitless, as when the disciples, on the Sea of Tiberias, had toiled all night and caught nothing; when alone and diligent in duty, as when the woman was surprised by the weary traveller at the well of Samaria; when in the crowd, as when Publicans and sinners gathered around to listen to His teaching; when troubles assail, and the heart fails for fear, as when the disciples saw One walking on the waters, and heard a voice exclaiming, "It is I;" and when come to the spot where the stream of time commingles with the ocean of eternity, as the dying Stephen beheld the standing Mediator; in the time-honoured temple, or the lonely unfrequented cot; in the quiet study or the bustling mart; in the noisy railway car, or in the habitation of a stranger; on the field of carnage, or in the wrecked and sinking ship; at any

season, in any spot, and under any circumstances, Jesus is wishful to receive the glances of faith and affection. He may be seen in the morning of life, when the rounded limb, the buoyant step, and the merry laugh characterise the scene. We may behold Him in the ripeness of manhood, when family cares or comforts, and business duties are occupying our thoughts. In old age, when the step totters, and the speech stammers, and the grasshopper is a burden, and the almond-tree blossoms, and they that look out of the windows are darkened, you may rejoicingly cry, "Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." In sickness, when writhing with anguish upon your couch, when visited by the skilled physician, and earth's "ministering angels" perform unnumbered acts of kindness; and in the final hour, when the horsemen are upon thee, the deep, dark swellings of Jordan immediately before thee, when the shadow of the approaching "King of Terrors" falls on the sunny hearth, when the pallor of death steals over the countenance, and the solemn hush of suspense reigns in the chamber—even *then* you may look unto Christ and be saved.

THE
EFFECT OF SEEING JESUS IS
BENEFICIAL.

“ If each good is delightful, consider diligently how delightful that good is which contains the joy of all good ; and not such a joy as we find in created things, but as different as the Creator is from the creature. For if life created is good, how good is life the Creator ! If health that is given be pleasant, how pleasant is that health which is the fountain of all health ! If the wisdom which recognises and contemplates things made be lovely, how lovely is the wisdom which made all things of nothing, and established nature ! In short, if the delights of delightful things are great and many, what is the measure of delight in Him who made these delightful things themselves ? Oh ! what will he have, what will he not have, who enjoys this good ? Whatever he does not wish shall not be ; he shall possess the good things of soul and body, such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man.”

AUGUSTIN.

CHAPTER III.

THE EFFECT OF SEEING JESUS IS BENEFICIAL.

“Let this hint suffice—

The cross once seen is death to every vice ;

Else He that hung there suffer'd all His pain,

Bled, groan'd, and agonised, and died in vain.”

THE unnerved and debilitated student, climbing the heath-clad hill, crossing the embroidered greensward, reclining by the blue, limpid stream of the valley, wandering in the sylvan shade of the forest, and watching the turbulent waters of the unsleeping ocean, is sensible of indescribable pleasure. Communion with the ambrosial fields of earth, and the emblazoned vault of heaven, elevates, enlivens, and invigorates him—accords tension to his mind, and elasticity to his limb. The lofty loveliness of Nature's face incites to cheerfulness, whilst the unbroken quietude imparts sweet calm to the anxious and ruffled breast. He feels “a meek and blessed influence stealing in, as it were, unawares upon the heart; it comes quietly, and without excitement; it has no terror, no gloom in its approaches; it does not rouse up the passions; it is untrammelled by the creeds, and unshadowed by the superstitions of man; it is fresh from the hands of its Author, glowing from the immediate presence of the Great Spirit, which pervades and

quickens it." This influence, however, is transitory. It exhilarates for the time, but departure from the objects which so charm, the cessation of intercourse with them, and the corroding effect of life's cares and conflicts, speedily banish the welcome results. Ay, more, the influence of nature, however good, will leave the inner man unchanged, unsanctified, unsaved. The greatest lovers of the material beauties of cosmos may live and die without an all-subduing, soul-saving love of God. Not so with the pre-eminent object of vision to which your attention is now being directed. In extent, degree, and duration, the fruits of beholding Christ with the eye of faith, surpass, incomparably, the effects attendant on a view of the grandest sublunary scene.

The first effect may be denominated *heart-breaking*. The Prophet Zechariah, conveying the burden of the Word of the Lord for Israel, wrote prophetically: "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born." Though there may be a fulfilment of these words yet to come, they have been, and still are being verified. Remember Job's words, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and

ashes." David when rejoicing over the forgiveness of his sin exclaims, "Day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer." Hezekiah, weeping painfully, said, "Mine eyes fail with looking upward: O Lord I am oppressed." Peter, glancing at his forsaken Master, was so moved by one sight of Him, that "he went out and wept bitterly." On the day of Pentecost many an anxious heart expressed its deep distress by the pathetic cry, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" That assembled multitude was "pricked to the heart" by the sight of the once pierced and then risen Saviour. Saul of Tarsus, journeying to Damascus, fired with a persecuting zeal, abandoned his purpose, forgot his position, lost sight of his boasted acquirements, and sought earnestly a knowledge of Divine truth, as the result of seeing the Redeemer. A company of sinners, which no man can number, has since then been humbled at the Cross; sinners with hearts as hard as the nether millstone, with wills like adamant, and habits like iron fetters; sinners from whose souls every call of Providence and conscience rebounded as an arrow on an impenetrable shield; who have received repeated cautions, witnessed again and again the destructive character of sin, heard ever and anon of the attractions of the heavenly home of the glorified, and the horrors of a world of woe. Some have passed through the most calamitous circumstances, and been spectators of the most tragic events; have stood by the

couch of death, and witnessed the solemn close of a fellow immortal's earthly career, with soul unsubdued, and sins not forsaken, but when they have turned to the Lamb of God their dry eyes have been tear-bedewed, and their hardened hearts humbled. By the light of the Cross man deciphers a catalogue of unpardoned crimes, and painfully discerns the terrible turpitude of the sins which necessitated such an agonizing death, and such an exalted victim. He bows before the Saviour, and owns himself the cause of all His sorrows. The repentant heart cries, "I have committed iniquity, Thou payest the penalty. I have done wickedness, Thou sufferest the vengeance. I have given birth to the crime, by its death Thou art slain. I have been proud, Thou art humbled. I have magnified myself, Thou art distressed in pressing straits. I have lived in disobedience, by Thine obedience unto death Thou atonest for my guilt. I have yielded myself to appetite, Thou art pained with want. To all unlawful desire the tree of Eden has driven me, to the tree of Calvary Thou art led by perfect love. I have put forth my hand to what was forbidden, Thou willingly endurest torture. I am delighted with the fruit, Thou broken with the torment. I enjoy delicacies, Thou art torn with nails. I taste the sweetness of the apple, Thou the bitterness of gall. Me the smiling Eve congratulates, Thee the weeping Mary bewails."* Every sight of the Redeemer plants a sting in the bosom,

* Saint Augustin.

and the conscience agonizes under the conviction of guilt.

Following this heart-breaking will be the work of *heart-healing*. "To bind up the broken-hearted" is one glorious object of Christ's mission. Hence, long before He united His Divinity to frail humanity, His work was typified in such a manner that this grand aim of His earthly sojourn may not be overlooked. The brazen serpent raised by Moses among the perishing, serpent-bitten Israelites, was intended to be a faint shadow of the promised Messiah. Whoever, among the many sufferers, turned his attention to, and fixed his gaze for a moment on the uplifted symbol, found instant, permanent deliverance. They who refused to look succumbed to death as their unavoidable fate. So the Lord Jesus was once raised betwixt heaven and earth, elevated as a sacrifice for men, and as an adequate representative of the world. In Him as the great propitiation there is healing enough, virtue enough, vitality enough for all the sons of adversity and sin. There is Balm in Gilead, there is a Physician there. "A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench." But He must be believed in—He must be beheld. Moses did not carry that brazen symbol to the camp of every sufferer, and cause some strange miraculous influence to proceed from it, for the restoration of the wounded, whether they would look or not. Nor is man saved from sin because Christ died, without any desire of salvation, any deep

feeling on account of sin, any exercise of confidence in Him. The remedy is provided, but man must seek it, and if the sinner perform his part, which is so simple, so feasible, he will feel health steal into his heart, to the expulsion and overthrow of all the lamentable fruits of evil. Conviction, like affliction, not joyous but grievous, shall yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Marvellous and supernatural was the power of Christ's death. Passing strange were the phenomena which signalized His sacrifice. The Atonement influenced the mouldering remains of the deceased, and the occupants of the spirit-world: "The graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." Centuries have elapsed since then, but that death hath never lost, shall never lose its transcendent power. The results differ now to those which startled the world when He gave up the ghost, albeit they are as great. The rocky sepulchre of natural unbelief is broken open, the cerements of evil habits which bind hand and foot are removed, and the soul is uplifted to a newness of life. Spiritual resurrections are daily, hourly occurring.

"There is *life* for a *look* at the Crucified One;
 There is life at this moment for thee;
 Then look, sinner—look unto Him and be saved—
 Unto Him who was nail'd to the tree."

The sight of Christ is *heart-satisfying*. All men are

painfully sensible of an unrest of heart—a yearning of the mind which can no more find satisfaction in the possessions and productions of earth, than the stream can rise to an altitude above the level of its source. “If you leave a curious impression in wax, nothing will fill that impression but the seal that made it.” God only can fill the soul. Bishop Reynolds asks, in language both strong and beautiful, “Whence arise distractions of heart, thoughts for to-morrow, roving and inquisitions of the soul after infinite varieties of earthly things, swarms of lust, sparkles of endless thoughts, those secret flowings and ebbs, and tempests, and estuaries of that sea of corruption in the heart of man, but because it can never find anything in which to rest, or that hath room enough to entertain so ample and so endless a guest.” Men seek the comforts they desire from every available source, in every possible manner, and with unnumbered sacrifices. Like Esau hunting for the blessing, or like the fabled Tantalus, they seek in vain. Theirs is the work—

“Of dropping buckets into empty wells,
And growing old in drawing nothing up.”

We are familiar with the ancient legend of the artist, who strove hard and long to carve the figure of the Madonna from a block of sandal-wood, and who, after repeated attempts and failures, was about to abandon his work, in gloomy vexation, when he was directed in a dream to carve the image from a block of oak, which was destined to be

fuel for his fire. He was not disobedient to the vision, but commencing with the rejected oak-log, produced a work of wondrous skill and beauty. The legend, however absurd, suggests to our minds the truth, that our happiness may be made, and our lawful desires gratified by means within the reach of all, and by means which may be employed in every place, and at every period of life. We need not aspire to honours—amass wealth—aim at freedom from business anxieties—make excursions to distant spots, or wait for any other time. A sight of Christ is all we want to make us truly, lastingly happy. Bunyan, in his inimitable and enchanting “Pilgrim’s Progress,” has conveyed this thought very strikingly. He vividly portrays “Christian” approaching the mystic emblem of redemption, and says, “Then was Christian glad and lightsome, and said, with a merry heart, ‘He hath given me rest by his sorrow, and life by his death.’ Then he stopped still a while to look and wonder; for it was very surprising to him, that the sight of the cross should thus ease him of his burden. He looked, therefore, and looked again, even till the springs that were in his head sent the waters down his cheeks. Now, as he stood looking and weeping, behold three shining ones came to him, and saluted him with, ‘Peace be to thee;’ so the first said to him, ‘Thy sins be forgiven thee;’ the second stripped him of his rags, and clothed him with a change of raiment; the third also set a mark on his forehead, and gave him a roll with a seal upon it, which he bade him look

on as he ran, and that he should give it in at the Celestial gate ; so they went their way. Then Christian gave three leaps for joy, and went on singing :—

‘ Thus far did I come, laden with my sin ;
 Nor could aught ease the grief that I was in,
 Till I came hither. What a place is this !
 Must here be the beginning of my bliss ?
 Must here the burden fall from off my back ?
 Must here the strings that bind it to me crack ?
 Blest cross ! blest sepulchre ! blest rather be
 The man that there was put to shame for me ! ’ ”

The immortal dreamer thus delineates the rapt experience of believers in all ages of the Church. The venerable Simeon exclaimed, “ Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.” He felt prepared to die, because assured of an expiatory sacrifice for his sins. If *his* anxieties were removed—*his* troubled heart tranquillized by a sight of Jesus as an infant, what abounding peace may not *we* expect when we now see Christ as victor over sin and hell—our God-acknowledged Redeemer and Intercessor ! Believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. A sight of the Saviour makes the wounded spirit whole, attunes it to be in harmony with itself and God. Christ is then formed within the hope of glory. The soul henceforth has inexhaustible resources in itself, and so becomes a well-spring of heavenly, perennial bliss. It is as full of joy as the vibrating chord is full of sound. It depends no more on earthly circum-

stances or surroundings. In every condition—whatever may be the change in life's panorama of dissolving views—the heart can turn to the God-man, can hide in the pavilion of the Highest, and find a sweet sabbatism, a serene hope, a joyous assurance, amid the conflicts and cares of earth.

Such comfort is the abiding portion of those who continue looking unto Jesus. They can be "always rejoicing." It is not true that a vision of the Saviour tinctures the mind with melancholy, and causes everything on earth to appear draped in sombre hues. He who serves the Lord must be sedate, but he need not be sad. Our Divine Master expects us to be grave, but gravity is not gloom. The believer is not a being with sorrowful countenance, sable clothing, sepulchral voice, and unsocial spirit. He may rather be delineated with a heavenly smile sitting on his face—a fadeless wreath entwining his brow—divine comfort enshrined in his heart—celestial music in his soul, and God's serene smile encircling his steps as he advances to a tearless, changeless, cloudless clime, where there are brighter skies, sweeter fruits, and fairer flowers. There is no reason why he who has a sight of the Son of God should be ever otherwise than happy. Unutterable emotions of gratitude and love well up within his heart—he has the commendation of the unseen, inward monitor—and before him looms a glorious, incorruptible inheritance. A source of strength and wisdom is open to him, which is unfound and unfrequented by the votaries of sin. In his heart he possesses

the clear witness of his acceptance by the Eternal, and a rapture preluding heaven. In the Revealed Word he holds a galaxy of "exceeding great and precious promises." The past is forgiven; the present is gilded by the effulgent glory of Immanuel; and the future, though hidden, has no terrors. Suffering leaves on "the soil of his mind a rich deposit, whence are ready to spring the blossoms of Eden;" and the grave smiles in his face. If ever the professed disciple of Christ be unhappy—if ever he walk with disturbed mind, in darkness and doubt, it is because he is looking at some thing or person other than his Saviour. The Heavenly Father's face is hidden from His children, with no other intention than of correcting them. We are encouraged to believe that so long as we are seeking rightly to discharge our duty, so long may our spirit be calm—"made even as the brow of Jesus, and smooth like the heart of God." To hold that we may be pursuing the proper path, looking steadily to the Captain of our salvation for guidance and grace, and yet be deprived of spiritual comfort by our Sovereign, simply for the purpose of testing our characters, has long appeared to me not a little hazardous. It is too much calculated to make believers well pleased and satisfied with themselves, in circumstances which ought to excite them to self-jealousy and searching of heart. It seems at once more safe, and more scriptural, to regard the want of peace and joy as arising invariably (except where there is a physical cause in a nervous consti-

tution) from, and indicating something wrong in, the spiritual temperament of our own minds—some sin, or some defect in ourselves. It is of essential consequence for us to be impressed with the conviction that if we are destitute of peace and joy, the *cause is in ourselves, uniformly and exclusively in ourselves*. It is not that God has withdrawn from us, but that we have withdrawn from God.

Another effect of seeing Jesus must be considered. The vision is *heart-hallowing*. “We are changed into the same image.” The child is satisfied with his toys till he eyes others which are better. The peasant and the prince alike fondly prize their possessions and pursuits till their attention is drawn to something nobler. Thus is it with the soul of man and spiritual realities. It lies down in contentment amid the broken cisterns and transitory treasures of this wilderness till it sees Jesus, and then time and eternity occupy different relative positions—the riches of Christ are found so unsearchable—the honours He promises so durable, that the spirit arises, shakes herself from the dust, tramples on what she before prized, speeds her way through the world’s Vanity Fair, and aspires to an altitude of holiness yet unreachd, coveting earnestly the best gifts, and seeking those things which are above. Thus the believer, attracted by the magnetic influence of the cross toward the Saviour, becomes weaned from the world, and meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light. Moreover, the mind of man will receive a colouring from

all with which he is called into association. Persons and things insensibly exert a magic, moulding influence upon man, so that if one mind be brought within the power of another mind, the opinions embraced, the habits cherished, the actions performed by both will evince a surprising agreement. We cannot sit down to the careful, continuous study of Addison without forming a pure, perspicuous, elegant style. We cannot be long in the company of Thomas Carlyle without being affected by his bold, rugged, manly, eccentric method of treating a subject. And we shall not be admirers of Johnson, without partaking of his lofty—sometimes dry, but always dignified—phraseology. The Rev. R. Cecil, referring to insensible influence, says he knew a man who took in a democratical paper only to laugh at it, but at length, having read the same things so frequently, he began to think there was truth in them. As it is with the printed thoughts and expressions of an author, so it is with the man himself. Associating with him we shall imbibe his spirit, and grow like him in character and conduct. A mighty, baneful, or blessed influence will involuntarily, unconsciously flow out from him to us. No man liveth to himself. On the same principle, if we are looking to, walking with, living on and by Christ, there shall spontaneously stream forth to us a comforting, conforming, hallowing influence. Our hearts shall dilate under the transforming power of the spirit of Christ. We shall be made partakers of His holiness, and

bear about in our hearts the fine portraiture of Deity obscured and broken by the fall. "The sun smiles on the earth, and the exuberant earth returns the smile in flowers." So, our souls, cheered and invigorated by the sight of Christ, shall, in the sight of Jesus, display the fruit of His hallowed condescension, even as the buds of spring unfold beneath the light and warmth of the solar beams.

Plutarch, albeit he was a heathen, and devoid of the *summum bonum*, was not wanting in good judgment when he wrote—"It is our duty to turn our minds to the best of everything; so as not merely to enjoy what we read, but to be improved by it. And we shall do that by reading the histories of good and great men, which will, in our minds, produce an emulation and eagerness which may stir us up to imitation. We may be pleased with the work of a man's hands, and yet set little store by the workman. Perfumes and fine colours we may like well enough, but that will not make us wish to be perfumers or painters; but goodness, which is the work, not of man's hands, but of his soul, makes us not only admire what is done, but long to do the like." What he recommends and practised in relation to the noble personages whose biographies he penned, is a work to which the volume of Revealed Truth calls men in respect to a spotless, superlative example. But if the effects produced in Plutarch, when considering and imitating such necessarily imperfect models, were beneficial, how grand, how vast, how beautiful may be the transforming results

of a careful, continuous looking unto Jesus? Think much, O Christian, of your Saviour—live in communion with Him. Whilst you place on lofty pinnacles those worthy followers who, though dead, yet speak, set towering far above them all that God-man on whose head are many crowns, whose name is above every name, and who liveth and reigneth for evermore. Adam's sons are not paragons of virtue. The best display of religion in the Church below is shadowy. Whilst you seek not to come short of the attainments of those whose characters have long been tested, aim at the holiness of Christ; point the arrow of aspiration to something higher than creature-perfection. Copy not simply the imitation, but the Great Original. It has been said that the flower that blooms in close vicinage to the rose, will partake of its fragrant perfume. True it is, that the soul planted in the garden of the Lord, which expands under the shadow of the cross, and makes the Rose of Sharon an abiding companion, will become redolent with the sweet fragrance of that celestial flower. Disciples of Jesus, gather round the central figure of the universe—the model life to mortals—and carve your being here to His perfect proportions and glorious symmetry. Do not be a satellite to any earthly luminary. Man loses power, and often errs, by imitating his brother. Make Christ your copy, and, by the grace of God, pencil in your heart and life the points of beauty you perceive. Let His whole walk here be your archetype. Take His prayers as models

of fervour and faith ; His love for, and submission to, the Father ; His affection, self-sacrifice, and pity for the brotherhood, as the text of your earthly existence. Walk even as He walked. Let there be personal assimilation to the Divine : this Socrates well describes as the goal of human effort.

When the soul is first directed to Jesus, its ardent desire is to continue gazing on Him—to sit at His feet for ever, viewing his ravishing beauties—to bivouac by the Cross—to imitate and enjoy Him—to have none other occupation than that of growing like Him, and expressing gratitude to Him. But, accompanying these joyous impulses of the new-created soul, there is soon experienced another emotion—an effect which we will term *heart-coveting*—an almost irresistible desire for active service in the cause of Christ. Beautiful examples are furnished us in the first chapter of John's Gospel, in which we see Andrew seeking his brother Simon, and Philip finding Nathaniel, abandoning all thoughts of monopoly, and earnestly beseeching them to "Come and see" the Lord. These are not the only cases in point. The man in the country of the Gadarenes, out of whom the Saviour cast many devils, may be referred to. When he was restored he desired to accompany his benefactor whithersoever He went, "But Jesus sent him away, saying, Return to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things

Jesus had done unto him." The woman of Samaria, when she discovered that He, with whom she spake, was the Messiah hastened to the city, and cried, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" Even the penitent thief, though his moments in this world were brief, yielded to the strong desire to serve, and, turning toward his companion in sin and punishment, said, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? and we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss." All true believers in the world's Redeemer have felt the stirrings of Divinity within, and found the Christian life to be sympathising and diffusive. They have pronounced it next to impossible to keep silence concerning the goodness of the Lord and the saving power of Divine grace. They have viewed the world as a theatre for the exhibition of manly courage and Christ-like compassion. They have yearned over their wayward relatives and abject friends; and, Rachel-like, could not be comforted whilst they were not alive in Christ. With eyes bedimmed with sympathy, they have looked forth on the abounding ignorance and iniquity of their neighbourhood, or of the world, and with self-denying zeal have cried, "How can they hear without a preacher, and how can they preach except they be sent—here am I, Lord, send me!" Ay, such are the winsome impulses which should fire every heart. The solemn, urgent business of all Christian men

is to cry, "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world!" This, "the lordlier chivalry," is not the work of the wise, the wealthy, the aged, the influential, the ordained, the paid *only*, but the honourable, happy, and heroic employment of every lover of Jesus. True piety is of the character of leaven, and has a tendency like that of the light. It throws around its possessor a shining aureole of influence. It is designed by the giver and guardian thereof, not simply to permeate the heart and life of its possessor, but to exert a convincing, curbing, correcting influence on society, to energize us in performing an evangelizing, a missionary work for the weal of the common brotherhood; to enlist us in a serious but valiant crusade against the giant evils that hold humanity in bondage.

"Heaven does with us as we with torches do;
Not light them for ourselves; for if our virtues
Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike
As if we had them not."

Look around you, brother in Christ, and you shall find many a burning brow to soothe—many a fainting form to succour—many a falling tear to wipe away—many a widow, sitting in the silence of despair, to encourage—and many an orphan, groping her way in an intricate and gloomy path, to whom counsel would be precious. Look around, and you shall see many a moral lazaretto crowded with lepers—multitudes of human hearts panting for life, for

liberty, for rest, and finding it not. As the subject of a Divine life, can you remain in stolid indolence? Can you suffer your powers to be paralysed by supineness? Or, will you be hindered from individual effort by the existence of multiform and powerful organizations? Surely, no! Having found Christ, your interior, spiritual life will embody itself in loving action—in holy service—in sublime, enthusiastic consecration to the imperishable work of the Lord. As Hannibal was led by Hamilcar to the altar to swear eternal hatred to Rome, so bring your powers of body and mind to the spiritual altar, and baptize them for martial combat with the powers of darkness.

THE
TIME FOR SEEING JESUS IS NOW.

“ Darkness has been
My God and me between,
Like an opacous double screen,
Through which nor light nor heat could passage find,
Gross ignorance hath made my mind
And understanding not blear-ey'd, but blind;
My will to all that's good is cold,
Nor can, though I would,
Do what I should.

“ Then unto Thee,
Great Lord of Life, let me
Direct my prayer, that I may see.
Thou that didst make mine eyes, canst soon restore
That pow'r of sight they had before.
And, if Thou seest it good, canst give them more.
The night will quickly shine like day,
If Thou but display
One glorious ray.”

QUARLES.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TIME FOR SEEING JESUS IS NOW.

"Now, is the constant syllable ticking from the clock of time ;
Now, is the watchword of the wise ; now, is the banner of the prudent.
Cherish thy to-day, and prize it well, or ever it be gulphed into the past ;
Husband it, for who can promise if it shall have a morrow ?
Behold thou art—it is enough ; that present care be thine ;
Leave thou the past to thy Redeemer, entrust the future to thy Friend :
But for to-day, child of man, tend thou charily the minutes,
The harvest of thy yesterday, the seed-corn of thy morrow."

FAMILIARITY with earthly beauties frequently lessens their attraction. The inhabitants of the most picturesque county, where scenes of surpassing grandeur and romantic boldness are almost worshipped by the visitors, look at the tourists with sentiments akin to ridicule. It is a matter of surprise that what they lightly esteem, and can gaze on every hour of the day, should be so earnestly sought, and pursued at such sacrifice. Very often, too, it happens to the traveller, that the second sight is unsatisfying compared with the pleasure produced by the first. The novelty has departed, and the pleasure dependant thereon. Hence, the love of change, which, more or less, moulds the purposes and plans

of all men. Not thus is it with the glowing experience of the saint in relation to his Saviour. Having once seen the Lord, his soul becomes so enamoured of His exhaustless excellencies, that he is constrained to continue "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." When first he sees Christ, he desires not to withdraw his attention but to fasten it on Him for ever. Throughout his⁴ earthly career his religious life is a series of glimpses of Jesus. Such is the teaching of the inspired writers. They describe faith as being an act—repeated, combined, incessant. They employ the present tense in their references to it; and the varied figures of speech, by which the Divine life in the soul of man is illustrated, are figures which convey the idea of perpetual effort. If the child of God is represented as running for the prize, he runs "*looking* unto Jesus." If he is depicted travelling with steady and sure step to the better-land, he "*walks* by faith." If he strives as a warrior for the victory, he has "the shield of faith." Is faith an approach to God? then it is continual, "To whom, *coming* as to a living stone, ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house." Indeed, the believer must say with Paul, "I *live* by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." The faith of the past will not suffice for the exercises and anxieties of the present. The vision of Jesus, which the soul enjoyed one day, will not satisfy the yearning heart the next, pleasant though the retrospect may be. The language of the lover of the world's Redeemer is, "I

have set the Lord always before me ;” and the more he looks the more desirous and determined he is to continue looking, inasmuch as, instead of exhausting the attractions of his Saviour, he discovers fresh charms. Each day new traits in the character of his Great Pattern are unveiled. Each day his soul can appropriate to Christ the words of the Queen of Sheba respecting Solomon, “It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit, I believed not the words until I came, and mine eyes had seen it ; and, behold, the half was not told me ; thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men ; happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom.”

You have seen the artist sitting with easel, canvas, colours, and brushes before him, transferring to that prepared surface the likeness of your friend. You have narrowly watched his movements, and have observed that, for every stroke of the pencil, there is an attentive, thoughtful look at the subject of the picture. He gazes intently, and, discerning one characteristic, paints it. He looks again, and another prominent feature, or delicate curve, engages his attention ; and thus he proceeds till the portrait is complete. Just so is it with the follower of Jesus. He does not cease viewing Christ after the first heart-breaking, heart-healing, heart-comforting sight. Desiring to possess the same mind which was in Jesus, the believer obeys the

counsel of Paul, "Consider," or literally, "*gaze on* the Apostle and High Priest of your profession, Christ Jesus." Christian reader, never withdraw your attention from Him whom your soul loveth. Like the eagle ploughing her way upwards through fields of air, with eye rivetted exclusively on the bright orb of day, press onward in your course, with a steady gaze at the Sun of Righteousness, remembering that the moment that finds your look diverted will find your soul's pinions drooping, your energies flagging, your heart's comfort disturbed.

Look to Him *now*, however the present may be tinged or tenanted. You are in a position of honour. Your company is courted. Multitudes speak well of you, and the needy earnestly crave your assistance. Then look to Jesus, who blended in His life untarnished majesty with unrivalled meekness. Behold Him, who created all things, and before whom every knee should bow, rising from the supper-table, laying aside His garments, girding Himself with a towel, and washing His disciples' feet. See Him "clothed with humility," associating with sinners as His friends. Hear Him saying, "I am meek and lowly in heart," and learn, however highly exalted you may be, to condescend to men of low estate, to recognize in the humblest saint a member of the Christian brotherhood, and manifest toward all men the greatest of the three heavenly graces.

Perhaps you are in circumstances of prosperity and joy; your barns are filled with plenty, and your presses burst

with new wine ; your spirit bounds with delight, and heavenly peace in mild serenity broods over your soul. Then, look to Jesus. He raised His heart in devout gratitude, and joined His followers in singing a hymn, even when sombre scenes were opening to His gaze ; surely you, from the soft lap of plenty, will give thanks for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Is your *now* the season of temptation ? Do Satan's darts fly thick and fast around you ? Look more to Christ than the tempter. Jesus encountered and vanquished the malignant enemy of God and man. Behold how unflinchingly He stood face to face with the arch-foe. Mark how He wielded the sword of the Spirit. Ay, look above and see Him, who suffered being tempted, now making your case His peculiar care. He says to you as He did to one before, "Satan hath desired to have thee, that he might sift thee as wheat ; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not !" Look *now*, and your assurance of ultimate conquest, like an evening star, shall be brighter in the deepening shades.

Are you now cast down by the conviction that you have been ill-used by your fellowman ? Perhaps some professed friend, like Demas, has forsaken you ; or some favoured companion, like Judas, has played treacherously with you. Then behold your pattern, "Who when He was reviled, reviled not again." See Him "dumb before His shearers," "enduring such contradiction of sinners," against Himself,

even pleading for His murderers with His expiring breath; and learn to stay that fiery ebullition of evil temper, to dispel those purposes of resentment, and cherish a loving, forgiving spirit. "Even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." Though hard to bare, yet aim to endure as seeing Him who is invisible.

You may now be perplexed by secular affairs. Your way seems hedged up by inscrutable mystery. Whether to take this path or that you do not know. How to encounter the task of to-morrow you cannot divine. Before you is a dark future, and every step carries you farther on into a labyrinth of difficulty and deepening gloom. Remember, Jesus committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously. So do ye! Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him. Be still, and know that He who cared for Israel of old will care for you. Acknowledge Him in all things, and you shall soon discover that all things work together for good. Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, "Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." He knows every turning in your pilgrimage path. If there be mountains, He can level them; if valleys, He can fill them; if stumbling-blocks, He can remove them; the crooked paths He can make straight; the rough places plain, and reveal to you the glory of the Lord in every step of the journey. Look *now* and your heart shall dwell in a zodiac of joy.

Is your now the hour of affliction? Think how the

"Man of sorrows" suffered, and ask, what are your distresses compared with His? Yours are but the ripples, His the billows; yours but the drop of bitterness, His the brimful cup. Think, too, how He submitted without a word of murmuring—aye, fully acquiescing in His Father's will. Forget not His sympathy with the sorrowful. "Christ's great end," says Richard Baxter, "was to save men from their *sins*; but He delighted to save them from their *sorrows*." He is the same now. He waits to kiss away your tears, to hush your troubled spirit to silence. His voice sweetly cries, "O, thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted—It is I, be not afraid!" Look *now*: and the angel of affliction shall bring under his wings a token of eternal love.

Possibly your spirits are now wrung with bereavement. Has death dealt with you as Rachel did with Laban, stolen your idols and borne them away? Have you a vacant seat in your home circle; a likeness in your album of a fair face not long since committed to the tomb? Are there *little* garments in your wardrobe which painfully remind you, O mother, of a lamb the Great Shepherd has taken to His bosom? Has the light of your household been quenched? Is the lovely flower of your family transplanted? Still, *look to Jesus*. Go with Him to Bethany; follow Him to the grave of Lazarus; see the out-gushing tears which bedew the sepulchre evincing the intensity of His sympathy and love. He

who is the resurrection and the life, who liveth that His people may live also, can, aye, *does* now enter with a brother's heart into all your joys and sorrows, hopes and fears. He says, "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me!" Look to Him *now*, and your solitary dwelling shall be bathed in Patmos-like glory.

The same advice must be given those who have never seen the Saviour with the eye of faith. If they possess a desire to see Him hereafter with transport, He must be seen here with trust. If they wish to discern Him at the throne, they must behold Him at the footstool. And for such a sight of Jesus the present is opportune. Dear reader, have you never yet seen the Lord? Does your conscience whisper—*never*? Then let me say, He invites you now, *now* to look and live. Methinks His short life, into which was condensed an eternity of woe, is vocal with the cry, "Look unto me!" Methinks every word He spake, and every act He performed crystallized the urgent command, "Look!" The tragic scene of Calvary—the dying cry—the five bleeding wounds—the pallid corpse—the brief tarry after the resurrection—the dazzling splendour of His ascension—*all* with trumpet tongue exclaim, "Look and be saved!" The Holy Bible—the sacred preacher—the monitions of Providence—the still small voice of conscience—and the gentle, repeated striving of the Holy Spirit, all say, "Come and see!" The Redeemer *wants* you! He

is waiting for you ; is willing to receive you ; is wishful to bless you.

It may appear to you, that, if you could see Jesus as He was when He tabernacled with man, when the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in Him bodily, when majesty and mercy were mysteriously wedded in one person, you would bow, humbled, at His feet. You imagine His glorious person ; His gracious words ; His benevolent temper ; His zealous, self-sacrificing labours, and you say, "If I could only see Him as the disciples saw Him ; if I could only see Him as the Jewish rabble who crucified Him saw Him, I should prostrate myself before Him with unutterable love." Not so ! Objects of faith can as effectually win man's affection as objects of sight. Were such a vision permitted and possible, it might surprise and overwhelm you, but that confusion would not be conversion of soul ; your bodily constitution might be much affected by the appearance, but your spirit might remain unsoftened. It is the Holy Spirit's prerogative to touch the heart, and subdue it to tenderness, and that Third Person you could not possess whilst you enjoyed a visibly present Saviour. Yours is a more favoured condition than that of those whom you may be inclined to envy. Though Christ Himself, addressing those who enjoyed the privilege of acquaintance with Him in the days of His flesh, said, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see : and your ears for they hear. For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and

righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them"—yet we may say, still more blessed are they who have *not* seen, and yet *have* believed. You have now the Spirit of Grace to do more than appeal to the bodily senses, and operate on the heart—a Spirit who can help your infirmities in coming to Christ; who can strengthen the vision of the soul to discern Christ; who works transformation in the soul by the sight of Christ. Think what multitudes saw Immanuel with the bodily eye, the fount of whose feelings remained frozen, and whose condemnation was terribly aggravated by their misused privileges. Think of the melancholy unbelief and ignorance manifested by most of those who saw Him frequently. Think of the masses who believed in Him after His departure, when the Spirit was poured out from on high. Think that His glory, tempered to human sight, and His voice, attuned to mortal ear, now come to you through the medium of the Spirit, and say no more that if you could see Jesus on the earth you would believe.

Neither listen to the deceptive suggestion that by and by will suit you better. Say not, with Felix, "When I have a more convenient season, I will" look and live. Remember that when the Lord began to exorcise the malignant spirits, they exclaimed that he was tormenting them before their time. Satan and his emissaries have the

same cry still, and will continue to raise the same objection whenever a heart turns Christward; even if it be the eleventh, the epochal hour of life. Perhaps your *now* is the season of *youth*; the season of physical health and mental elasticity, when the mind is not weighed down by earthly cares; when the feelings, like a sensitive plant, recoil at the thought of ill; when the conscience, "God's vicegerent in the soul," speaks out in clear and unmis-taken accents; in a word, perhaps your *now* is the most favourable of all seasons for seeing Christ. Then conse-crate it to Him. When Abraham was called of God to sacrifice his son, he rose up early in the morning for the discharge of the task. You are called on to glorify God in your body and spirit which are His—now, now in the morning of your days yield yourself unto Him. Let not the arguments and entreaties of ministers, the counsels of Christian friends, and the homilies daily preached by Providence prove of no avail. Let not evil habits grow i number and gather to themselves the strength of years. Think not of deferring your decision till a distant stage in your course, lest when you reach it, unlooked-for obstacles hinder you. Be not so ungrateful to Him who is the "Giver of every good and perfect gift" as to cherish the thought of dedicating to Him the powers which have been worn out in the service of Satan. Little enough is *all* that we can give to, and do for, our best and truest friend. Oh, let that all be His!

Mayhap, reader, that your *now* is the season of "man's mellow'd years." You are sensible that time is stealing fire from the mind and vigour from the limb. Memory is failing; infirmities are increasing; and all things daily remind you that you are going the way of all the earth. Often you look back with bitter lamentations to bygone opportunities. Often you shed tears, in secret, at the thought of your present disadvantageous, dangerous position. Do you ever strive to turn your red, swollen eyes towards heaven? Do you ever look through your blinding tears to the Lamb of God? Resolve that no effort shall henceforth be wanting which it is in your power to put forth, and that you will no longer neglect the great salvation!

This is your *duty*, for thus we read—"Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein."—"Kiss the son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little." Jesus commenced His ministry exclaiming, "Repent ye and believe the gospel." Subsequently, addressing unbelievers, He said, "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." These, with similar words, were clearly understood by the apostles as precepts, for, said John, "And this is His commandment, that we should believe on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ." Hence, faith is represented as obedience to the Divine command. Paul says, "But they have not all obeyed the gospel, for Esaias saith, 'Lord, who hath be-

lieved our report ? ” “ But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.” “ O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you ? ” Hence, also, unbelief is represented as a grievous and punishable sin. John says, “ He that believeth not is condemned already,” “ He that believeth not the Son shall not see life ; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” And again, “ He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar ; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son.” Whosoever earnestly desires, and strenuously seeks, to act in harmony with the Divine command, to shun that which God hates, and which is ruinous to himself, acts a praiseworthy part. Blessed are they that do his commandments. In keeping the precepts there is great reward.

You have seen a young man embark in life. Receiving from parental lips a kind behest, and an earnest entreaty, he quitted the roof where he drew his first breath, and learned his first lesson. His lot was cast in the midst of evil. His companions tempted him ; allurements of every phase encompassed him ; the strong hand of the arch-tempter was upon him, but the thought of a mother's entreaty, and a father's caution and prayers kept him faithful to principle—firm in his pursuit of the good. He struggled against the Circean spell ; he deafened his ear to the syren voice of the

deceiver, and remains to-day untouched in his integrity. Is he deserving of esteem? Is he a successful candidate for our admiration and praise? Then so is he, who, in a world of sin, recalls the precepts of the Infinite-One, and with all his heart seeks the Saviour of souls. You have seen the faithful husband return from his business occupation, to learn that there is illness in his peaceful home. You saw him quietly enter the chamber of sickness. He looked, through blinding tears, on the pale face, parched lip, feverish tongue, and writhing frame of her he loved and vowed to cherish. Then, fearing the insidious but near approach of the King of Terrors, and desiring the safety of one so dear, he hastened, nothing hindering, to procure the immediate aid of the physician. Did he not perform the part of duty? Yes, truly. Then so does he who knowing that his soul, more precious far than all earthly loves and joys, is withering under sin, and in danger of eternal death, seeks the Great Physician, and craves deliverance. But for any man, whose heart is still covered by gross natural darkness, to slight the Saviour of the world, and refuse to see Him is folly akin to that of the idiot who, imagining the sun had offended him, turned his back upon the sacred lamp of heaven, resolving to live independently of its influences.

Do you, dear reader, seek Him of Nazareth, as did the Greeks, with an irrepressible desire to penetrate all external evidences, and experience for yourself the blessedness of

heart-felt religion. Like Zaccheus, put yourself in the way of the Son of David. Like Nicodemus, determine to come to the Redeemer, even though it be under a cloud of difficulty. Draw near the Cross with your burdened spirit, with your enquiring mind, with your softened heart. Look on Him whom you have pierced, and you will rejoice in the consciousness that you have acted justly by yourself, and by truth ; that you have obeyed the voice of wisdom, and chosen the good part which cannot be taken from you. "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness."

"Come to the cross of Jesus in thy gladness,
It has a charm to make thee happier still ;
Come ! in the darkest season of thy sadness
When thickening sorrows shall thy faint heart fill.

Come ! while thy life is overcast with sorrow,
And o'er thee threatening clouds are hanging low ;
While with deep terror watching for the morrow,
Lest it should bring thee deeper, bitterer woe.

Come ! while the evening shades are round thee falling,
And day is drawing to an early close ;
When soft, low voices are thy spirit calling,
And thou art hastening to thy long repose.

Come ! when the fairest lights of earth are fading,
In the mysterious darkness of the grave,
When death thy chilly brow and cheek is shading,
And thou art called to breast cold Jordan's wave.

Come ! in *all seasons* to the cross of Jesus,
And learn the thrilling story of His love ;
It will cheer and sanctify, refresh and ease us,
Fit us for life on earth and rest above."

THE
UNVEILED SIGHT OF JESUS SHALL
BE HEREAFTER.

“ Christ is as necessary to the heavenliness of heaven, as He is to the holiness of earth. In the very height and rapture of the sanctity of heaven, when every thought of all its radiant multitudes is captive to the obedience of Christ, and knows its happiness only in that blessed bondage, were the horrid conception possible that Christ Himself should suddenly cease to exist, that instant every ray of its holiness would expire ; not merely the heart would seek *in vain* its resting-place, it would no longer possess the *desire* to seek it ; not merely the light would be *wasted* in the void abyss, it would be *quenched* utterly, and for ever.”

ARCHER BUTLER.

“ We shall see him as he is.”—JOHN.

CHAPTER V.

THE UNVEILED SIGHT OF JESUS SHALL BE HEREAFTER.

“ As through the artist's intervening glass,
Our eye observes the distant planets pass,
A little we discover, but allow
That more remains unseen than art can show ;
So whilst our mind its knowledge would improve
(Its feeble eye intent on things above),
High as we may, we lift our reason up,
By faith directed, and confirm'd by hope ;
Yet are we able only to survey
Dawnings of beams and promises of day :
Heaven's fuller effluence mocks our dazzled sight,
Too great its swiftness, and too strong its light.”

How anxiously do men anticipate the fulfilment of a long-cherished hope, and the completion of an important transaction. With what eagerness does the voyager look for the first dim outline of his native shore! How ardently the sculptor longs to see the marble image upon its pedestal, and the painter the crowning touches given to his landscape, and the author the fruit of his mental toil in the finished volume. So does the good man desiderate the hour when his wanderings will be concluded, the veil uplifted, and the home of holy spirits reached. Where is he who, treading the path of sorrow, shedding tears of repentance, enduring strong pangs of parting, or wrestling with grim spiritual enemies, does not

ever and anon anticipate a happier and a holier state elsewhere? Is there an heir to the fatal bequeathment of the first man, who has not more than once sighed out the feelings expressed by Israel's King, "O that I had wings like a dove, then would I flee away and be at rest?" Very numerous are they who, like St. Monica and St. Augustine in their last conversation at Ostia, discourse on the nature of the eternal life which eye hath not seen nor ear heard.

Such imaginings and aspirations in a disciple of Christ have relation to an empyreal spot invested with superlative attractions and sublimest beauties—a spot where the refined, immortalised body, united with the stainless spirit, shall be enthroned in infinite glory. The believer possesses no specific information as to the locality of that oft-anticipated land. He cannot say whether the rest that remaineth for the people of God is proximate or remote; whether it is above the fields of light, above the starry spheres, far above all heavens, forming the centre around which revolve all the systems of the universe; or whether it is near to him, so that if the vision were freed from the trammels of the flesh, he would discern the rapt occupants of celestial thrones surrounding him. The saint often wonders where he will find the "many mansions" of the Father's house—where stands the spacious metropolis to which "the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord." What are the specific employments of the just on the shore of the river

of life? Shall there be distinctions in character and disposition there? Shall those who come from opposite quarters of the world, and conflicting sections of the church fraternize with each other? Is it far to the promised land, or is there but one step between us and it? Will the middle wall of partition, like a delicate tissue, be rent by the last breath, and disclose the grand secrets and splendours of Paradise? These matters which belong unto the Lord, often afford subjects for conjecture. Though the believer knows but little that is positive and definite, concerning his future home, he feels he has enough revealed to justify his confident expectation and ascending aspiration. He reads the affectionate words of the Divine Master to His discipulate disciples, when about to leave them—words which are “crystal drops from the fountain of life”—“In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” He turns to the graphic delineation of the Ascension, and beholding the Saviour bearing aloft his human nature, he reasonably concludes that there must be some definite locality where the glorified body of Christ still exists. Ignorant of all topographical particulars concerning heaven, it is enough for the Christian to know, that, as it is the presence of the monarch that makes the Court, so, not simply congenial scenes and associations,

but the presence of Jesus will constitute heaven. That thought exhilarates his spirits, and transports his heart with joy. That makes him long to "mount the narrow staircase of the grave, that leads out of this uncertain twilight into the serene mansions of the life eternal."

The saint has, indeed, magnificent and majestic descriptions of his future home. The Apostles have raised the veil which hangs between this world of shadows and that land of ineffable glory, opening to view scenes of unutterable, overwhelming grandeur. "A door was opened in heaven," that the Seer of Patmos may tread the golden pavement, listen to "the voice of harpers harping with their harps," examine the glory-girt battlements, take the measurement of the jasper walls, and witness the ecstatic employment of the glorified; and now, in the Apocalypse, we read in superb illustrations and attractive language, a chronicle of the revelations which burst upon his elated vision. The Christian expects, when he has been ferried across the deep, dark Jordan, and has entered the boundaries of his Father's house, to find himself in a city where all is infinite beauty:—

"The air, the soil, the rivers, fruits, and flowers,
Instinct with immortality, and touch'd
With amaranthine freshness, by the hand
That form'd them, and the beatific smile
That ever beams around them."

He expects to see an illustrious multitude whom no man

can number, clothed in conqueror's robes, swaying kingly sceptres, and uniting in sublime strains of triumph and praise. He expects to behold a company of serene Intelligences who, swifter than the sunbeams, hasten forth on Divine commissions. He expects to be re-united to his beloved relatives who were called away from earth before him, and, through eternal ages, enjoy an attachment which no time shall diminish, no death disturb. But these thoughts charm and encourage only as they stand connected with the presence of Jesus. Far above all other attractions—ay, the source, the embodiment of all others, is Christ, the “all in all” of heaven. As “o’er a million lamps, a single sun will shine pre-eminent,” so, above all the glories of that better-land, the saint expects to see the beauty of his Saviour. He thinks of the celestial city as a desirable habitation, only because its perfection and splendour emanate from Christ. He thinks of the occupants of that world as worthy companions, and the employment as joyous and untiring, only because Jesus will be the theme of every song, the utterance of every tongue, the thought of every heart; only because, as with a sacred irresistible, centripetal force, all the hierarchies of heaven will tend to Him, all eyes turn to the central throne, and every soul glowing with unutterable emotion simultaneously join in singing, *Thou* hast made us kings and priests unto God, and we shall reign with Thee.” The lover of Jesus feels if there were no Christ

there would be no heaven. There may be the noblest company, the sweetest employment; angels may be there to tell their stories of protecting care; cherubim may be there to describe how the sons of God sang together when the work of redemption was accomplished; ransomed souls may be there to recount the goodness of God in His dealings with them; Moses may be there, his brow bathed in brighter glory than that which sat on him when he came down from Sinai; the prophets of Horeb may be there, bearing the transformed body with which, when borne by the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof, he entered his reward; the Shepherd-king may be there, "sweeping a harp far more melodious and tuneful than the one he swept with a master-hand on earth;" Isaiah may be there, bending before the "Man of Sorrows," of whose coming he was the herald; Apostles who were the first pastors of the Christian Church, Martyrs whose bones are scattered to the four winds, Confessors who "lived unknown till persecution dragg'd them into fame;" and tens of thousands with whose names "no bard embalms and sanctifies his song"—a great cloud of witnesses all holding sweet, perpetual fellowship, may be there, and all that is princely, pure, and imperishable, may be provided to minister to their bliss; but if there be no glimpse of the face of Jesus, heaven will be robbed of all its charm, and will fail to gladden and gratify the soul.

Hence believers in every age of the world, have summed up their hope and expectation in the one desire of seeing the Lord. The patriarch Job, calling off his attention from blighted prospects and departed joys, elevating his mind beyond the inferior concerns of this lower sphere, gave expression to his winged thoughts in the words, "In my flesh I shall see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." The "man after God's own heart" travelling onward in thought to the time when the days of his pilgrimage should end, wrote, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." The Divine Teacher, when discoursing on "the Beatitudes" to the anxious and surprised auditors, depicted the heritage of the righteous in the words, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." The Apostle John, when rejoicing over his heirship of immortality, summed up all his knowledge of the future in the language, "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." And after the revelation granted the beloved disciple, Christ was first and last in his conceptions of heaven, for, says he, "His servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face; and His name shall be in their foreheads." Over these, and other such portions of Holy Writ, the Christian now bends with a yearning heart, and an all-absorbing joy. With such testimony he longs and waits for the hour,

when, no clouds veiling the unnumbered, unbounded, unexplored, beauties of His beloved, and no fleshly vestments operating as a hindrance to the soul's vision, he shall *see Jesus*—the “King in His beauty”—the God-man glorified.

Socrates rejoiced at the thought of conscious intercourse and association with Hesiod and Homer. Cicero anticipated the society of Cato. Heaven, to the poet Southey, was the home of genius, and he wished to be there that he might converse with Shakspeare, Dante, and Chaucer. John Foster delighted to think of the future state as “the grand scene for the attainment of the fulness of man's existence.” Robert Hall, subject to days and nights of wearying pain, conceived of heaven as a state of *rest*. Wilberforce, with a warm heart amid cold conventionalities, expressed his idea of the better-land as being a region of *love*. But all conceptions are lost in the Apostolic desire “to be with Christ, which is far better” than all else. That to the Christian is the consummation of bliss. The monk who stood near Joan of Arc when she was enveloped in flames, says, “I heard her pronounce the name, Jesus, Jesus.” “Margaret,” said John Evans, a Welsh minister of notoriety, in conversation with his wife, “Margaret, I may be a thousand years by your side in heaven without having seen you; for the first thing which will attract my notice when I arrive there will be my dear Saviour; and I cannot tell when I shall be for a moment

induced to look at any other object." A sainted female, distinguished for her pre-eminent goodness, was accustomed to say,—“My *first* joy in heaven will be to see Jesus.” Her son, who writes her memoir, says:—“While her gathered children were surrounding her dying bed, watching the closing scene, expecting each moment to catch the last sigh, her eyes partly opened, her lips moved, and with a low yet distinct voice she repeated the words, ‘I see Thee! I see Thee! I see Thee! I see Thee!’ The unearthly grandeur of the scene transcends all description. We felt that heaven was opened—that Christ was there—that the eternal world enclosed us. ‘What do you see, dearest mamma?’ The only reply was, ‘I SEE THEE! I SEE THEE!’ As her voice grew fainter and fainter, and the words died softly upon her lips, she ceased to move—a holy quiet reigned—a solemn calm ensued—her sanctified spirit was in the bosom of her Lord.” When the eminent divine, President Edwards, was quitting this stage of life, he bade his heart-broken relatives a loving “farewell;” and then looking around his chamber, exclaimed, “Now, where is Jesus of Nazareth, my true and never-failing friend?” Similar have been the closing hours of many, very many of God’s people. As they have approached the border-land, the whole spiritual hemisphere has been flooded with the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, who before was but dimly seen. The apocalyptic promise, “His servants shall see His face,” has seemed to

them fulfilled before they have wholly parted from earth. The rapture attendant on an unveiled vision of the Saviour has taken possession of their heart, leading the sorrowing bystanders to infer that, the first object to greet the eye of the emancipated spirit is *Jesus*—the alpha and the omega of the wonder-teeming spirit-world. “I like to hear of the beauties of heaven,” said a dying saint, “but I do not dwell upon them; no, what I rejoice in is that *Christ* will be there; where He is I shall be also. I shall see him. I delight in knowing that.” Thus feel all the true members of the sacramental host.

Now, to see Christ implies more than that the Christian shall be a spectator. That *alone* would be an inestimable pleasure—ay, a greater privilege than the best of mortals has any right to claim. To spend an eternity in gazing at the symbol of the Father’s presence, and the manifestation of His glory, would be a reward unmerited by all our conflicts, sorrows, sacrifices, and deeds. Dr. Rudolf Stier very beautifully says, “Our *love* teacheth us that to be *with Christ* would be, in itself, fully sufficient for blessedness; love desires, even in heaven, nothing besides Him for its unutterable joy; but *faith* knoweth, at the same time, that His crowned love will endow His own with an equal crown, and therefore scorns not the crown, the highest gift of the Highest Giver.” Yes, the idea of participation with the Redeemer in the glory of His exaltation, attaches itself to the thought of the beatific vision.

In the scriptures, *seeing* is sometimes used to imply *partaking*. For example, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my sayings he shall never *see* death;" or, as we understand it, "shall never be subject to, or partaker of death." The same applies to that beautiful clause of the High-Priestly prayer, "Father, I will that they whom Thou hast given me, may be with me, where I am, that they may *behold* the glory that Thou hast given me." With this thought of communion before him, Paul wrote, "If we be dead with Him, we believe we shall also live with Him," and again, "If we are children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ: that if we suffer with Him, we might be also glorified together." Being made partakers of His sufferings on earth, we shall be co-partners of His joy and glory in heaven. But what tongue can describe, what pen portray the glorified condition of Jesus? We generally conceive of Him as He *was*. We think of Him as a sojourner among the sinful. Then how chequered, sad, and tear-stained was His career. His earthly connections were poor—His words were misrepresented—His works evil spoken of—His character blasphemed—His person cruelly treated. Then His countenance was grief-marked—sweat-drops stood like crimson beads upon his brow, and His sorrow-shaken body bowed beneath an inconceivable burden. The prophetic declaration was fulfilled in Him, "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we

should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." But

"How unlike
The babe of Bethlehem! how unlike the man
That groaned on Calvary—"

will He appear above. There clothed in honour, exalted to supreme dignity, "the brightness of the Father's glory." He shall be the light and beauty of the upper temple; on His brow many crowns, and at His bidding all the hierarchy of Paradise. Though the condition of Christ "as he is" transcends all power of mortal conception; and though it doth not yet appear how vast shall be our happiness; how wondrous our dignity when we have exchanged the garments contaminated by contact with sin for the vestments of immortality, yet we know that we shall be like our Lord. Our present bodies cast off, as *exuviae*, we shall possess bodies fashioned like unto His glorious body. Our souls in love, in purity, in peace, shall resemble Him; and partaking of His perfection we shall "shine forth as the sun, in the Kingdom of our Father."

To see Christ above, includes, also, continuous revelations of the Godhead—ever fresh additions to our knowledge of the Deity. The soul possesses an innate tendency to advancement. It will not be limited and confined to any amount of information it may already enjoy, but will ardently aspire to higher and fresh spheres of knowledge. In this world the penetrating winged-flights of man's

intellectual faculties have been vast and wondrous. The soul has mastered and moulded the varying, and sometimes opposing, circumstances of life—has risen superior to all impediments—has transformed them into aids to its own development, substrata on which to rear more triumphant and comprehensive views. But notwithstanding the grandest thoughts and conceptions of our princes in the realms of science and literature, our attainments are very circumscribed. There are domains of truth no human mind has ever trodden—an horizon no mental eye has ever swept. Albeit, our present requirements are infantile, defective, shadowy, compared with the far-reaching fields of truth before us; our present inherent capacity for, and coveting of wider, grander revelations lead us reasonably to conclude that, when the soul is no longer flesh-veiled, it shall advance in knowledge with princely and pleasurable speed. “Now we see through a glass darkly;” here “we know in part, and we prophecy in part:” but the moment the saint enters the presence of Jesus, he shall see “face to face;” the clouds which at present conceal what of the Divine glory may be visible to holy beings, shall be dispelled; the incubus of sin shall be cast aside; and in and by Christ there shall be imparted successive communications and rapturous discoveries of the Divine character as long as eternity. Commencing our glorified life with proper, and in kind, perfect thoughts, we shall never be compelled to

banish or obliterate views which pre-occupied the mind. Though eternity shall witness us untiringly "reaching forth to those things which are before," it shall never find us "forgetting the things that are behind." Such aspirations after fresh truth shall proceed from love to Him whose inexhaustible glory we study — not from mere intellectual pleasure. The more we look at the Holy One the more we shall discover to admire and love; the stronger our affections will wax; the deeper will be the repose of our spirits. Every revelation will be an additional cord weaved into that blessed bond that ties our hearts to Him who sitteth on the throne. And there will be a perpetual progress in our apprehensions, as there will be in our aspirations. There will be ever new desires and new delights from infinite resources. "Can we ever persuade ourselves," asks Dr. Watts, "that all the endless train of thoughts, and ideas, and scenes of joy, that shall ever pass through the mind of a saint through the long ages of eternity, should be crowded into every single mind the first moment of its entrance into those happy regions? Such a bright confusion of notions, images, and transports, would probably overwhelm the most exalted spirit, and drown all the noble faculties of the mind at once." With expanding capabilities there will be accessions in knowledge. There will be as much difference between the saint's knowledge and love of Jesus, after he has been ages in the presence of his Lord and

when he first awoke in His likeness, as there will be between his acquirements when first welcomed home and when he was a wanderer on earth. The song there will be a song of degrees. "We have no reason to doubt," writes Dr. Dick, "that the saints in light will be perpetually acquiring new discoveries of the Divine glory, new prospects into the immensity of God's operations, new views of the rectitude and grandeur of his moral government, new accessions to their felicity, and new and transporting trains of thought, without the least interruption, as long as eternity endures."

This participation with Christ, and communication from Christ—in a word, this vision of the unveiled Saviour—shall be enjoyed for ever. Now, in the dim twilight of earth, we occasionally catch heart-comforting glimpses of the face of our "Beloved." We are carried to the summit of Hermon, and are sunned by the smile of our Lord. We hear sweet melodies, learn saving lessons, are thrilled with unspeakable delight. But such seasons of Divine enchantment are rare and short-lived. We cannot give perpetuity to our hallowed moments. Like Peter, James, and John, we have to descend the mount of glory, and mingle again with the shifting, sombre, saddening events of life. Sometimes, from the weakness of the flesh and the strength of the spiritual foe, we continue long in darkness, asking sorrowfully, "Why art Thou as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to

tarry for the night?" More frequently we are compelled to own, "Behold He standeth behind our wall ; He looketh forth at the windows, showing Himself through the lattice." But hereafter, above, its hall not be so. The sight of the Saviour shall be unremitting and perpetual. There shall be no dissolving views ; no passing manifestations, no sudden, unsubstantial joys. Nor shall there be any suspension in our employment—any abatement in our lordly progress. We shall find no sepulchre in that garden. Nothing will be arrested in its upward and onward tendency. All, all, shall be solid and satisfying yet ever-growing and ever-lasting. It will be an incessant spring, and yet a fruitful summer. The land will abound, in amaranthine plants, the flowers of which will be the buds of others more beautiful. Our acquaintance with the Eternal One, our conformity to His beauteous image, our enjoyment of His honourable service, shall, unlike the tides of earth, be ever flowing without a momentary ebb ; or, unlike the monarch of the day, be ever ascending without a point of culmination. How felicitous, how inviting this thought ! Who does not long to enter that tearless, sinless, sorrowless world, and bask in the ineffable light that streams from the seat of supremacy and exuberant glory ?

"Come, O my soul, thy future glory trace,
If thou receive the Saviour's offer'd grace,
Infinite years in pleasure thou shalt spend,
Which never, never, never, have an end !

Yes, thou shalt dwell where saints in glory are,
As many years as atoms in the air ;
When those are past, as many to ensue,
As blades of grass, and drops of morning dew ;
When those are past, as many yet behind
As forest leaves when shaken with the wind ;
When those are gone, as many thousand more
As grains of sand upon the ocean's shore ;
When those are spent, as many millions more
As moments in the millions past before ;
When all those blissful years, exempt from pain,
Are multiplied by myriads yet again,
Till numbers drown the thought : could I suppose
That then my bliss in heaven would have a close,
Thrice happy then my glorious lot would be,
But still that would not be eternity.
Eternity would then be just begun ;
The day of bliss just dawning, rising heaven's bright sun ;
The concert opening, only ; banquet just prepared,
First greetings scarcely past ! first welcomes only shared ;
The jubilee just commenced, the harps just strung,
Just tuned the lute, first timbrel struck, and anthem sung ;
Just caught the strain by east, west, south, and north !
Their joy is *inconceivable* ! their happiness *henceforth* ! "

Dear reader, for a sight of such eternal unfoldings of the Godhead we must become prepared in this world. One of the greatest of modern writers, Thomas Carlyle, has reminded us that the eye sees only that which it brings with it the power of seeing. The physical organ must be in a fit condition to receive the light of the sun, before it can gaze on the "Sire of the seasons." There must be a keenness of vision, a generous glowing admiration of the

beautiful, a susceptibility to order and nobility before a traveller can discern the exquisite forms in which nature displays herself. The poet Thomson tells us of some who wander through beauteous scenes "with brute unconscious gaze." With beauty before them they are sensible of no love; in the presence of majesty they are smitten with no reverence; and surrounded by mystery they are strangers to the subduing influence of awe. If a man *as* internally unprepared for his external condition could enter the land of light and holiness, he would discover nought there in harmony with his taste. He would hold no fellowship with the pure spirits of the glorified. The light, streaming in plenitude from the throne of God, would be too intense; for the river of life, issuing in crystal streams from beneath the seat of empire, he would never part; for the luscious fruit hanging on the tree of life, to which all the righteous "have right," he would cherish no hungerings; devoid of sympathy in thought, in feeling, in service, with the happy intelligences that people the beatific city, he would wander a sad and solitary being. The heart must be brought into a susceptible and receptive state, if it is to enjoy the unspeakable manifestations of the higher world. The pure in heart only, shall see God. Those who are born again only, can see the Kingdom of the Holy One. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." This fitness is to be acquired by continual communion with Christ—by accustoming the.

spiritual vision to fix its gaze on the face of the Saviour—by aiming, through grace, to scale the heights of Divine conformity, and fathom the depths of infinite mercy. With days of heaven upon the earth a man grows qualified for heaven's unending day. Christ being within him he is adjusted, attuned, equipped for heaven without him. Looking to the Light, the spiritual eye is tempered to behold the King's face, where the true light shineth in full-orbed, rich, and unobstructed lustre. Over the Saviour's words, "Surely I come quickly," the believer's heart bows with sublimest joy and intensest hope. Every event which heralds the Lord's approach he joyously welcomes. For his coronation day he patiently and expectantly waits. He often says with Rutherford, "Oh, that Christ would remove the covering, draw aside the curtains of time, and rend the heavens and come down!" With our master-poet he cries, "Come forth out of thy royal chambers, O Prince of all the kings of earth. Put on the visible robes of thy imperial majesty. Take up that unlimited sceptre which Thy Almighty Father hath bequeathed thee. For now the voice of thy Bride calls thee, and all creatures sigh to be renewed." With the eloquent Irving he can affirm, "My soul desireth to see the King in his beauty, and the beautiful ones whom he shall bring along with him." And the description given of the saintly Augustine, in his final moments, will apply to

such believer, he is "full of an inextinguishable burning—a vehement longing" for Jesus.

Dear reader, submit yourself wholly to Christ as your prophet, priest, and king. Fix your heart upon Him as your all in all. One glimpse of Jesus may, by the efficacy of Divine grace, make you partaker of His spirit and His joy. But that which will sanctify your body, soul, and spirit; that which will make you resemble the Redeemer, is a constant looking at Him. On the Mount of God the worshippers rest not day nor night in their study of the Great Spirit. *Do you imitate them?* Let the winged hours, as they pass, find you leaning on Jesus, thinking of Jesus, trusting in Jesus, loving Jesus, praying to Jesus, working for Jesus. Let your desires after your Beloved be fervent; your communion with him continual; your obedience to him faithful; and your heart-cry ever this—

" Oh let no earth-born cloud arise
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes !"

THE END.

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